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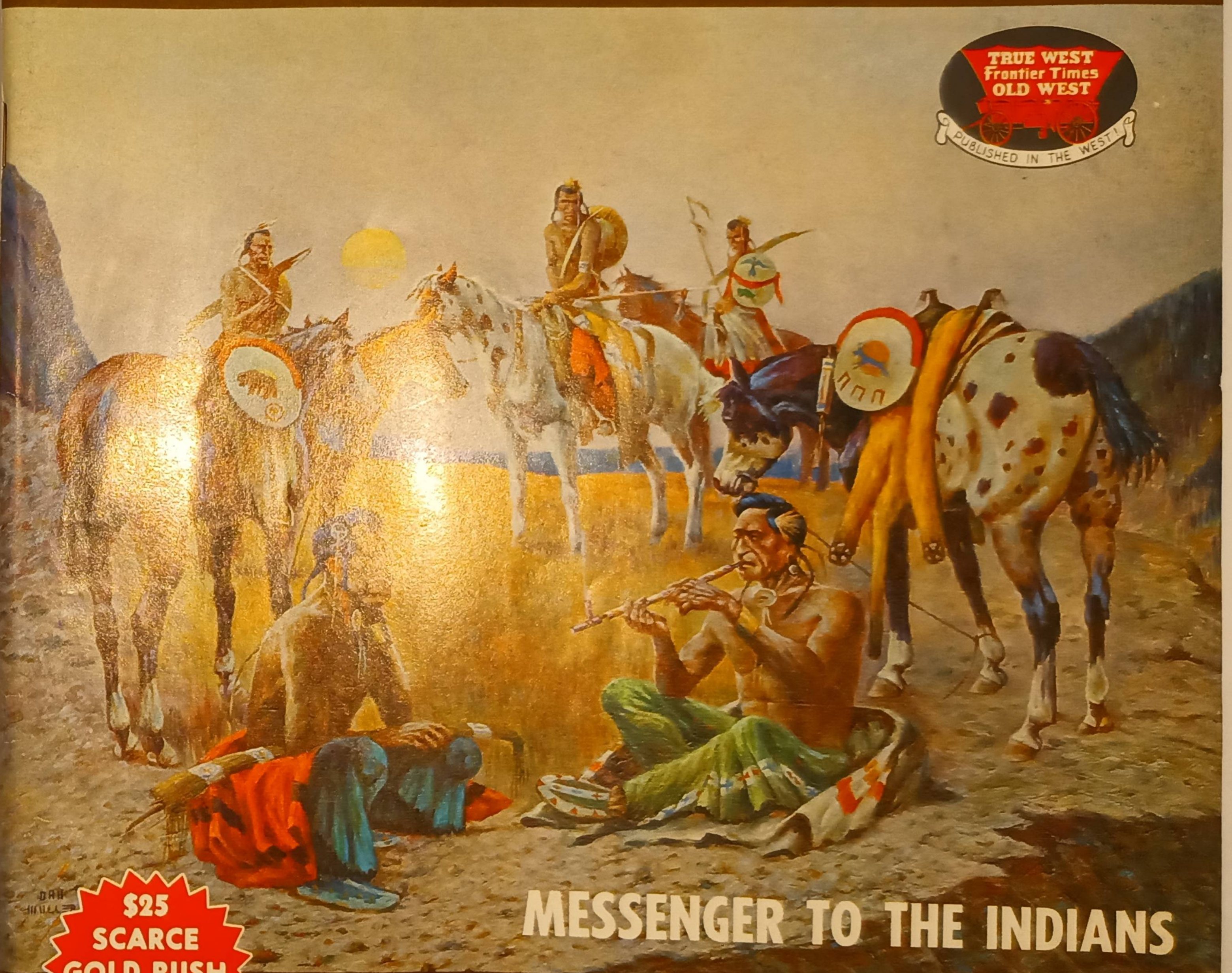

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—BY WALT COBURN—

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CAPTURE OF THE HORSE THIEVES

LOST FROZEN BLOOD • MYSTERIOUS MONSTERS

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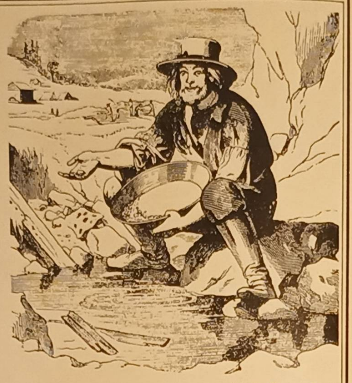
"EXPERIENCES of a FORTY-NINER during a THIRD of a CENTURY in the GOLD FIELDS"

By Charles D. Ferguson

BEGINS on PAGE 72



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FALL, 1969 VOL. 6, NO. 1 WHOLE NO. 21

Also, In This Issue

FOURTH OF JULY AT LODGE POLE ...... *Walt Coburn* 2
LOST FROZEN BLOOD .... *Maurice Kildare* 8
MESSENGER TO THE INDIANS .... *Joseph W. Snell* 12
"YELLOW KID" AND THE WISDOM TOOTH .... *Agnes Wright Spring* 16
NEAL COLDWELL—GALLANT TEXAS RANGER .... *A. J. Sowell* 18
THERE WERE ALL KINDS OF GUNFIGHTERS .... *Colin Rickards* 22
OUR COUNTRY'S MYSTERIOUS MONSTERS .... *J. K. Parrish* 24
THE OLD JJ RANCH—
  HOW IT BEGAN .... *Ike Osteen* 26
  HOW IT WAS RUN .... *A. E. "Andy" Crozier* 27
DEADWOOD'S LADY OF CARDS ...... *Mildred Fielder* 32
CAPTURE OF THE HORSE THIEVES ...... *W. E. Harris* 34
LETTER RIP! 42
TRAILS GROWN DIM 68
WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP 70
TUMBLEWEEDS .... *Tom K. Ryan* 96

What's the celebration?
Turn to page 2!

Who's this cowpoke?
See page 27!

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WHO KNOWS MORE ABOUT BEAT FREQUENCY METAL DETECTORS THAN THE PEOPLE WHO PERFECTED THEM?

Fourth of July at LODGE POLE

It produced a star-spangled hangover that Walt has never forgotten!

By WALT COBURN

Photos Courtesy Author

AS A GENERAL RULE all holidays, along with all Sundays, were just ordinary work days for the forty-a-month cowpuncher on a ranch such as my father's Circle C outfit in the Little Rockies country of Montana.

Jake Myers was the ranch foreman and wagon boss on the roundups, and when my father told Jake not to show me any favors just because I was his son, he meant every word. When the big six-foot Oklahoma-raised ramrod got that look in his eye and put on a left-handed grin for my benefit, it was both a promise and an "or else" warning that he might pour it on if I got out of line.

The trouble was, I was plumb content to remain a common cowhand—free, loose and careless. Barely out of my teens and wanting no part of being straw-boss handling a crew of older cowhands, I irked my father who wanted me to assume responsibility. "It's time you growed up," he was wont to repeat when I sloughed off on some job which required a certain amount of ramrodding. There was no use telling him I felt like a damn fool, a bald-faced kid giving orders to seasoned cowhands, many with a sprinkling of gray in their hair who had forgotten more about cowpunching than I would ever know. I had never once talked back to my father, never had the temerity to put up any argument. It was always "Yes, sir," never "No, sir."

At this particular time it was between roundups and no cowpunchers were at the ranch. On the morning of July 4th Jake had taken his family to Malta, giving me my orders for the day.

"Ride over on the reservation, Walt. Get a range count on the Circle C cattle. Locate our bulls and any cows with big bags and their calves missin' and any unbranded calves missed on the calf roundup. Be sure to mark it all down in your tally book. If you make a long, wide circle as far as the sub-agency at Lodge Pole, you should be back by dark. I'll be back at the ranch about supper time tomorrow, and until then you'll be in charge of the outfit." Jake had that aggravating grin on his face.

I felt like thumbing my nose at the big Oklahoma josher, but I changed my mind. I'd halfway planned on taking in the Fourth of July celebration and dance at Zortman and Landusky, picking up a ranch girl I was stuck on to take to the dance and riding back by moonlight. But I didn't have the nerve to come right out and tackle Jake for the day off, and for

Walt Coburn, left, who as a youth joined Assiniboine Indians (right) in celebrating America's Independence Day in far northern Montana.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society

From Pioneer Cattleman in Montana by Walt Coburn. Copyright 1968 by the University of Oklahoma Press.

Jake Myers, left, and Bob Coburn (Walt's brother) with their hounds on Circle C Ranch.

good reason. Last June 13th, on Miner's Day in the Little Rockies I'd sowed a few wild oats at Zortman, been arrested for shooting off my six-shooter, and fined a month's wages which Jake had taken out of my pay.

Before I pulled out this morning for Fort Belknap Reservation to follow Jake's orders, I tackled Mac, the bookkeeper, for a twenty-five dollar loan to be charged to my account on the books, but Mac said that Jake had left orders to cut me off at the pockets.

"If you got a wild hair in your nose," Mac said, "of heading for Zortman or Landusky, you better get the notion out of your head. Lay low and take it easy or Jake will ride your tail till the cows come home. If you got any wild ideas in your bonehead I don't want a damn thing to do with it. Understand?" Mac was drywashing his hands, then he dug down in his pocket and came up with a ten dollar bill, which he handed me.

I SADDLED UP a stocking-legged, bald-faced strawberry roan gelding called Corbett, the best cow-horse in my string and a town horse to boot. I had it made. Zortman and Landusky were out. I was headed for the reservation as Jake had ordered, knowing Jake had forgotten that the Indians were holding their annual Fourth of July ceremonial dances at Lodge Pole.

I'd been adopted into the Assiniboine tribe when I was a six-year-old kid. Old Black Dog was my sponsor (something akin to godfather) and he had given me my tribal name of Ocksheebie, meaning Boy. And I was remembering the time the Injun kids my age—Jesse Iron Horn, Roy and Abe Long Knife, Merlin Shield, Andrew White Horse, to name a few—had invited me to join the boy's society named "Act Like Dogs."

The Injun boys would slip away from camp, strip down to breech-clouts and moccasins, and smear their bodies with a thick coating of white clay. At a given signal by their leader they would scatter and charge back into camp, barking and snarling like dogs. They'd grab strips of beef that had been hung up to dry, and the women tending the supper fires would scream and take after them with sticks, yelling shrilly and calling names. When the boys had stolen enough meat they would run back into the brush, wash off the white clay in the creek and cook the meat over an open campfire.

That same summer my brother Wallace had taken me with him to the ceremonial dances at Lodge Pole which were held inside the medicine lodge on the benchland above the sub-agency on the creek. Wallace Coburn was the only white chief of the Assiniboines, who called him Iron Tooth on account of a gold tooth. While he sat in with the other tribal chiefs in a half circle near the drum and singers, I joined Jesse Iron Horn and other members of the Act Like Dogs.

"Fool Dance" of the Assiniboines.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society

Courtesy Montana Historical Society

Assiniboine Indian cowboys are, from left, Adam and Rex Flying (together on horse), Roy Longknife, Harry Healy (the sub-agent's son who promoted the five-gallon jug of whiskey at Lodge Pole), Merlin Shield, and George Moccasin (standing).

There in Old Iron Horn's lodge I stripped down to clout and moccasins, and Jesse Iron Horn and Roy Long Knife smeared my whole hide with soft white clay mud. Then about a dozen of the Act Like Dogs boys waited for a break between the warriors performing the Grass Dance. The camp crier blew a single shrill blast on his bone whistle and the boys came charging into the dancers' circle. Each of us held a three-foot-strip of fresh steer-filled entrails or guts. A tight fist gripped each end as we danced and pranced in imitation of warriors in the Fool Dance, the only boys' dance.

The Indian spectators, both men and women in their ceremonial beaded buckskins and war bonnets, occupied about two-thirds of the circle. The white spectators, mostly ranchers and their families and a goodly number of dude tourists, were kept in their places by blue-coated, brass-buttoned, uniformed Indian policemen.

Two drummers squatting on opposite sides of a large drum thumped out drumbeats with bare hands while the boys barked and snarled and howled like dogs in cadence to the drum, dancing bent over around the large circle. A group of big white youths from town, with a male schoolmarm, shouted taunts at us, clowning around in imitation. One big fat, overgrown kid, who seemed to be the leader, was yelling at the top of his voice, "Gut eaters! Yah! Gut eaters!" Others joined him in the taunting, and the he-schoolmarm was grinning like a pale-faced Cheshire cat.

The Act Like Dogs dancers pretended not to hear or understand the taunts and seemingly ignored the group of white kids dressed in their Sunday best for the glorious Fourth, until the climax of the Fool Dance when the drum beat quickened its cadence. Jesse Iron Horn was the leader and as he danced past the big fat white kid one hand let go the end of the filled gut, which spattered the kid's straw hat and flushed face, the white shirt and Sunday suit. One by one the other dancers followed suit, and when it came my turn I let fly at the face of the buck schoolmarm. Every city kid was plastered from head to foot with fresh soft cowdung before they knew what had happened. Then yelling and shouting, barking and howling, we ran as fast as our legs could carry us, scattering out as we headed for tall sagebrush, then down the slant of high benchland to the creek to wash off the muck and clay.

Thus the boy's society of Act Like Dogs counted coup that memorable Fourth of July day when I was formally initiated. The memory of it all came back to me as I topped a hogback ridge.

A MILE DISTANT the circles of white canvas tepees came into view where the Assiniboines and Gros Ventres were camped. Beyond lay the ragged outline of the Little Rockies, and all around as far as the human eye could see was the vast open prairie. To the north was Milk River and the Canadian border, once the great hunting grounds of the Assiniboine Sioux and the Gros Ventres Blackfeet. Sworn enemies long before the coming of the first white man, both warlike tribes now were forced to live together in peace within the confines of the Fort Belknap Reservation.

I sat on my horse for a long time, lost in daydreams of stories the Old Men had told as I sat with my brother Wallace in their lodges. Even at that early age I was able to know and understand the heart of the Indian people, their legends, the brave deeds of young warriors who had counted coup. And because the Old Men now lived in the past, an edge of sadness crept into my being like an invisible shadow that dimmed the bright morning sun.

I was so lost in thought that I was at first unaware of the confusion of sounds coming from a long bushy coulee below the hogback ridge where I waited. The muffled sound of horses' hoofs, the harsh angry bawl of a steer, the crash of brush. I reined my horse over to

Courtesy Montana Historical Society

Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Indians at Sun Dance ceremonies, Fort Belknap Agency.

where I could get a bird's-eye view of the long coulee. The grazing cattle were on the move, disturbed but not spooked by what was going on. Three horsebackers were in view. One of them had roped a big brockle-faced four-year-old beef, and I had no trouble in recognizing the roper as Roy Long Knife. A second horsebacker, swinging a big loop in an attempt to rope the steer's hind feet, was Joe Walk Slow. The third rider was Jesse Iron Horn who had dismounted and was cautiously circling the moving steer with an axe in his hand, waiting for the chance to dodge in fast and hit the steer in the head with the blunt end.

Every year at the ceremonial dances the Indian agent at the Fort Belknap Agency allowed the Indians to butcher a big steer, the meat to be cut up and divided equally among the Indian families gathered there for the Fourth of July celebration. These three young Indians had been sent out to kill the beef. Since no full-blood Indian was permitted to carry firearms, the steer was killed with an axe and its throat cut to let it bleed. The squaws then arrived in a Studebaker wagon to skin and butcher the beef and haul the meat to camp.

Roy Long Knife was a good bronc rider and roper and he had made the lucky throw to head-rope the steer which was now on the prod. He had taken his dally winds around the saddle horn and was spurring his horse to keep the rope taut. Joe Walk Slow was a sorry roper at his best and heeling a head-roped steer required both skill and long practice. Joe missed loop after loop. And every time Jesse Iron Horn came in close with his axe the steer would charge him. When Jesse tried to slip up behind, the steer cow-kicked him in the belly and sent him sprawling on the ground, the axe flying through the air. When the steer charged it was all Roy Long Knife could do to rein off quick enough to prevent his horse from being gored by the long horns. It required all his cowhand's skill to handle his pony and keep the rope taut without losing his dallies.

None of them took notice of me until I spurred my horse down the slant with my Colt six-shooter in my hand and shot the steer behind the ear, dropping it in a half somersault, dead as a door nail. Those three boys had been in a bad tight when I made that grandstand play and I knew I had counted coup.

"Better cut its throat with your butcher knife, Jesse," I called out, making it sound loose and careless.

Jesse Iron Horn took the butcher knife from its scabbard fastened to his belt and cut the jugular vein. Roy Long Knife rode up slowly, coiling the slack in his rope and Jesse removed it from around the horns. None of them so much as said one word of greeting or looked in my direction as I rolled and lit a cigarette.

"What you fellers got in your craws?" I asked, breaking the uneasy silence. "From the way you Injuns are acting you'd think I had smallpox or something." Nobody gave me a word of answer.

Roy Long Knife pointed at the dead steer and for the first time I took special notice of the Rafter T brand, as plain as a sign on a billboard. It was a cattle brand which was registered in the brand book as belonging to the Coburn Cattle Company. I'd shot one of our own beef steers.

"We was fixin' to turn the steer loose," Roy Long Knife spoke slowly. "I didn't know I'd roped a Rafter T steer by mistake."

I cut a quick look at the axe Jesse Iron Horn had dropped. But I made no comment about it.

"All we need to do is cut out the brand and cut off both ears," I said and managed a sort of sickly grin. "Cut them up and scatter them to hell and gone. Nobody here is going to spill the beans."

Joe Slow Walk shook his head sideways as he pointed to an Indian policeman in a ten-gallon black hat who had topped the hogback ridge and was gigging his spotted paint pony down the slant. The policeman had heard the roar of the gun and come to investigate.

"That's my brother Abe," Roy Long Knife announced in a flat-toned voice. "Abe got the job as Indian policeman last week, and he's real proud of his new job."

Courtesy Montana Historical Society

Early-day Fort Belknap Agency.

ABE LONG KNIFE was a few years older than his brother Roy. He had a wife and three kids and had finished high school at the Fort Shaw Indian school at Sun River. Abe was of medium height, stocky build, with a growing paunch of hard fat, and had a good-natured moon face. He was one of the slow thinkers, never given to sudden impulse either in speech or action, maybe a little on the lazy side. The easy job of Indian policeman exactly suited him, and he wore his uniform with an air of importance. A wide belt around his middle held a scabbard with a hardwood billy club. He wore moccasins and kept his thick blue-black hair at shoulder length. In many respects, despite his American schooling, Abe Long Knife was all Injun, unlike his brother Roy who acted and dressed like a cowboy and was at home on the white man's roundups and in ranch bunkhouses.

Abe reined up his fat paint pony and his stern look was a little out of character with his usual good nature. It took him a few long moments to take in the whole picture. He was well aware that the three full-blood boys had been sent out to butcher a steer belonging to the United States Government with an ID (Indian Department) brand on the right side, and he knew a Rafter T brand as well as anyone. As he tried to figure out what he was looking at, I could follow Abe's puzzled thoughts by the frown that put a vertical line between his black eyes.

"I heard some shootin'," Abe's slow guttural voice broke the uncomfortable silence.

By that time I had 'er made. The way things stood now it would be hard for

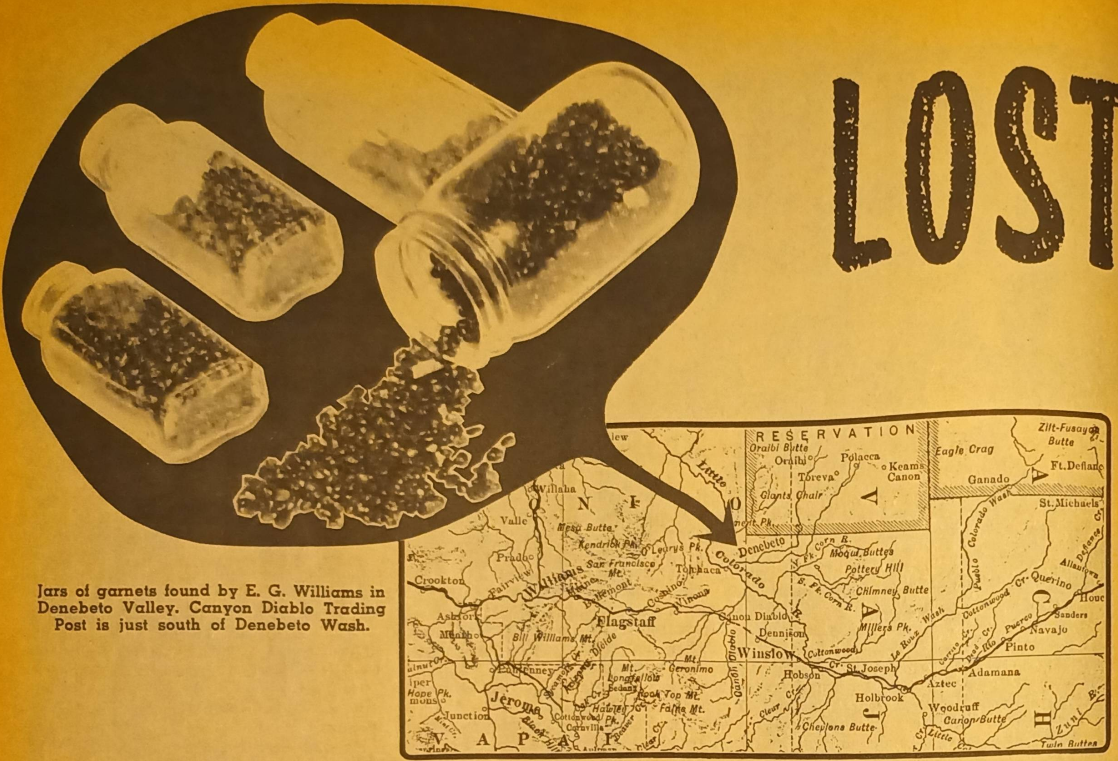
(Continued on page 47)

Ration day at Fort Belknap.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society

LOST FROZEN BLOOD

Garnets, like the beaver hat, eventually lost favor in the world of fashion, but for a while they were dear enough to pit man against man



Jars of garnets found by E. G. Williams in Denebeto Valley. Canyon Diablo Trading Post is just south of Denebeto Wash.

By MAURICE KILDARE

Photos Courtesy Author

GRIZZLED desert rat Mark Howe packed a Bemis seamless bag into the Arizona trading post at Canyon Diablo on the railroad. Dropping it to the floor next to the counter he grinned at whiskered Fred Volz.

"You still paying a buck each for red garnets?"

"I am and I need some. Have you found anymore?"

"Tolerable spasm. Say, you ain't got a little something to wet a man's whistle with?"

Smiling, Volz reached under the counter top, bringing up a brown quart bottle. Howe held it to tobacco-stained lips for a long time.

Volz remarked, "You're not afraid to pick up garnets? There's that old superstition they are frozen or petrified blood, you know."

Releasing the bottle from his mouth the old prospector chortled, "Me scared of something worth a bat hide apiece? Shucks, finding them is easier than hunting for gold out there along Denebeto Wash. And gold ain't there nohow!

"Say now," after a pause, "that's a good name for them. Frozen blood!"

"How many do you have? Five hundred or so?"

"I reckon." Reaching into the sack Howe brought forth a quart whiskey bottle.

Pouring the contents on the counter, Volz whistled sharply as the dark red stones kept spilling out. He stared at them in astonishment. Surely a couple of thousand. Howe chuckled dryly, producing a second whiskey bottle.

Still wordless, Volz got a foot ruler. Smoothing the piles out on the counter he raked them free in units of ten while counting.

"Five thousand and eighty-two!" he exclaimed when the lengthy job was completed. "Mark, you're rich. But say now," his voice fell flat, "that's too many for me to handle. I'll send them to a jeweler on the Coast for you, if you like."

"Okay, Fred," Howe agreed. "Still got money to buy provender with, from the last time in."

Howe then selected flour, bacon, coffee, tobacco plugs and a few odds and ends. Packing it outside he sacked and tied the supplies on three burros. The fourth, a jenny, wore a light saddle, which he forked. Upon his squall the burros fell in behind the one ridden.

A MONTH passed before Howe showed up again. Having received a check for the stones, Volz handed over a bank sack filled with money. Giving Volz two more filled whiskey bottles Howe said that he planned to go to Flagstaff for a few days. He would go by train and leave his burros in the post corral.

Howe stayed a week. On returning to Canyon Diablo his whiskers were shaved off, his hair was cut, and he wore new clothes. Loading up with supplies again, he departed north into the wastelands of Navajo country across the Little Colorado River.

Two weeks later when he came back, less than 300 garnets were delivered, but money was waiting from the last batch of stones and Howe took the train to Flagstaff again. Three days later he returned.

"Are you about to run out of garnets up there, Mark?" Volz asked him earnestly. "The reason I ask, a New York jewelry manufacturing firm would take 10,000."

Not answering right away, Howe swallowed two deep draughts from Volz's whiskey bottle. Then he bought a gallon jug to take along. Not until he was selecting supplies did he begin talking.

"Plenty more up there. Many times more than what them jewelers want. You sure we can still sell them?"

"I'm sure of it."

"Well, I'll fetch some in. Last time I only fooled around. Hunted in a new place."

"Far to the north?" Volz asked cautiously, aware that prospectors such as Howe invariably resented questions.

"No, Fred. I cut a slant from here to the river above Grand Falls. Cross there and go over into Denebeto Valley. Through them sand dunes even when it's blowing. Past the next stand of sagebrush there's a gravelly flat. The ground is covered with them little stones. I only get the largest. It's kinda hard on the back stooping over so long, though."

After Howe pulled out that day Volz never again saw him alive. Three days later, on June 16, 1889, according to Volz's carefully kept journal, Navajo Indians brought Howe's burros to the post. The old man had been found in the timber beyond the malpais country.

Early that morning Navajos had seen above the tree tops the smoke of a big fire where a long abandoned, beehive-shaped hogan stood. After midday two of them rode in that direction. They found the burros. The hogan had burned up with Howe inside. The charred pieces of his body were dragged from the ashes with poles. Later Volz had one of his clerks bury the remains.

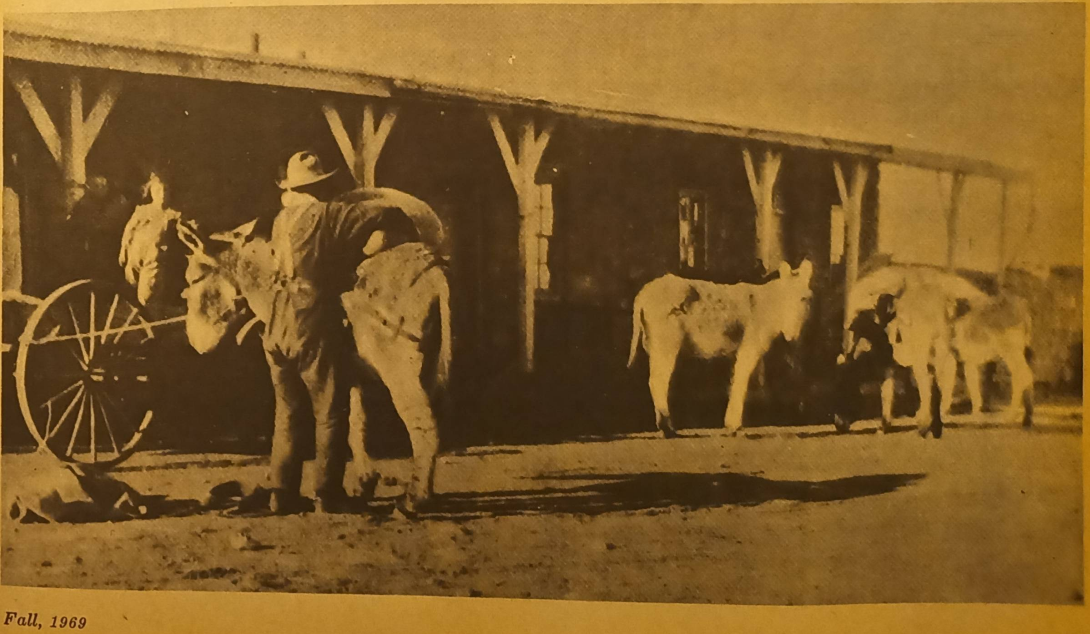
Howe's death was probably an accident, the result of drinking too much whiskey. Or it could have been murder. Without having said so, he had indicated one purpose of his Flagstaff trips was to send money to someone in another state. Other facts about him would never be learned.

What concerned Volz greatly was the source of the first-grade dark red garnets. He became even more curious upon receiving letters from Coast jewelers asking for another shipment. When his brother Bill came to visit from their partnership post at Cornfields, Volz decided to look for the stones.

Taking an Indian guide and a pack outfit he rode north according to Howe's directions. They crossed the river at Grand Falls and traveled into the sand

Volz Trading Post, Canyon Diablo. Man packing burro is believed to be Mark Howe.

Courtesy Jeanette Volz



Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe

Atlantic & Pacific Railroad bridge spanning Canyon Diablo near Volz Trading Post about the time of the story.

dune country. Above it they entered the vast sagebrush covered range. On emerging from it they were in rolling grassland, spaced often by flats. The heavy winds, famous in that area, had blown off the top soil over the years. The surface was covered deep with small bits of gravel.

Camp was pitched at dusk. Early the next morning Volz and the Indian proceeded about the business of searching for garnets. But not one did they find, even in the debris of ant hills. After a week of discouragement Volz abandoned the try, returning to Canyon Diablo.

Not once did he doubt that he and the guide had gone to the right area in Denebeto Valley. He simply had failed to reach the flat where Howe picked up the stones. The now lost garnets, the sometimes feared frozen blood, had eluded him.

IN THE spring of 1890 Gib Polman arrived at the post. Middle-aged, swarthy of complexion, Polman was a prospector whom Volz had encountered before. Taking Polman into his confidence, Volz explained roughly where the garnets had originated. If Polman could find the exact place they would go partners and mine them extensively. Most likely there were tens of thousands under the gravel and dirt cover. Being mechanically inclined Volz had worked out a contrivance to pan them with a revolving drum. He believed a fortune could be made.

Polman always rode a horse, packing a big mule. Grubstaked in the venture, he proceeded by way of Grand Falls. Two weeks later he returned, delivering less than 200 garnets.

"These come from several scattered places," he explained. "They surely lead to float washed down from somewhere higher up, to where Howe got them off the ground. I'll have to trace them to the source."

A second time Polman went forth. A few days later he returned to the trading post and fell out of the saddle. Dried blood disfigured his blue percale shirt. He had been shot twice in the side of the chest. With the help of his clerk and two Navajo Indians, Volz got the heavily built man inside the post to a cot.

"We'll take you over to the depot just before train time," he told Polman after examining his wounds and deeming them to be critical. "We'll get you to a Flagstaff doctor as fast as possible."

"It ain't no use," Polman managed to say. "I hardly made it to here. Yesterday somebody hiding in the sagebrush shot me. Killed my mule. Get a piece of paper. I'll draw a map. Found Howe's flat."

"You are sure?"

"If that ain't where he got them—you can shovel them up, Fred."

Getting a writing tablet and pencil, Volz handed them to Polman who rested in a reclining position. Holding the tablet slanted before his face he laboriously scratched on the ruled paper for five minutes. All at once his arms fell down, his body slack and his eyes wide open in death.

Stunned, Volz felt his pulse and shook his head sadly. When he picked up the tablet the lines scrawled on it made no sense at all. They formed no map. The next day Polman was buried in boothill south of the railroad tracks.

Volz suspected that a Navajo had killed Polman, and for many months several of the trader's very close friends in the tribe sought such evidence without success. Not a single Navajo family lived within miles of the flats where the garnets came from. Nor could they find any sign of a man and stock leading up the Denebeto Valley.

Requests from jewelers kept reaching Volz. Garnets were then being cut, polished and made into ladies' fancy necklaces and brooches, a form of expensive jewelry which had become popular in that decade.

FOR a year no other attempt was made to locate Howe's lost frozen blood. Then a buyer representative of the American Gem Company in Los Angeles visited Volz. The garnets Volz sent in were of a better grade than those imported at a cheaper price. The buyer offered to pay 15c per carat for all Volz could deliver to them.

The price startled Volz. The garnets which Howe had found weighed from eight to twenty-five carats. Most of them averaged around twenty. After listening to Volz's story the buyer said, "They must have come from a placer. Perhaps they washed into the valley from the mesa. We hope that you will make every effort possible to relocate them."

Assuring him that he would, Volz began looking around for a trustworthy prospector. That summer he found a part-time one, William (Windy) Walker, who knew gem stones.

"There should be diamonds in these parts," he told Volz confidently at Canyon Diablo. "That curious blue clay in the Little Colorado River basin has the same composition as that in South Africa."

Walker wasn't called "Windy" without a reason. Having just sold a copper claim at Globe, he furnished half the grubstake with Volz as partner to locate the garnet placer. Going into the Denebeto Valley with a pack outfit of two mules, riding one, his method was to criss-cross a promising area. In every flat found, he drove a numbered stake in the center. The numbers were marked on a map for reference. Beginning at the south end of the valley he inspected a dozen or so flats. From two he obtained a handful of garnets. Most were poor grade, having a pale pink color and quite unlike the valuable deep red stones brought in by Howe.

About a month later Volz was awakened in the middle of the night. Windy was angry and greatly put out.

Grand Falls on the Little Colorado River. Garnet-hunters crossed the river into the Denebeto Valley just above the falls.

"Some galoot started shooting at me from a long distance five days ago!" he reported. "I was then up to my third layer of flats. Here's what I found. Give me half a case of ammunition!"

Slowly Volz digested his fast spoken words, examined the stones and agreed with him they had not come from Howe's find.

"But this shooting business? That is dangerous, Windy."

"Maybe and maybe not. Had only twenty cartridges with me but I ran him off twice with them."

"I am surprised that the Indians object to anyone prospecting in those barren lands. None lives there. Not enough grass for sheep."

"Indians, nothing!" Windy exploded. "This jasper is a white man. Probably the one who shot Polman. I'm after that gem placer, and this feller is going to get his if he don't stop messing with me."

On returning up the Denebeto, Windy found that the marker stakes had been pulled up and carried away during his absence. Dismounting where tracks were plain, his feeling that the sniper who had fired at him was a white man, was confirmed. At his temporary camp he found the other mule shot dead. Riding on under the cliff face to the spring where he permanently camped, he discovered everything he had left there had been stolen. Fortunately he had brought a sack filled with food from Canyon Diablo.

After filling his canteen and watering the mule, Windy went on around the mesa wall to a concealed place where he kindled a fire and cooked supper. Night was falling. He then saddled up and moved half a mile away, returning afoot to the glowing firebed. Windy added sagebrush to create a flame which would attract attention at a distance. When it was burning brightly he went out into the flat, lying down behind a clump of soapweed.

An hour passed before the faint figure of a man emerged through the big blocks of stone which had tumbled down from the wall. The man advanced slowly between Windy and the dying fire. Bareheaded, he walked hunched over, a rifle held ready to fire. The moon was bright and except in mesa-cast shadows Windy could see very well. Not caring to kill the skulker at this stage, he merely sent a bullet whistling over his head. The man stiffened a second before leaping behind a large rock and sending two bullets at the spot he thought Windy occupied. The lead was a hundred yards to the left. As time elapsed the man grew nervous, firing wildly into the soapweed and sagebrush closer to him.

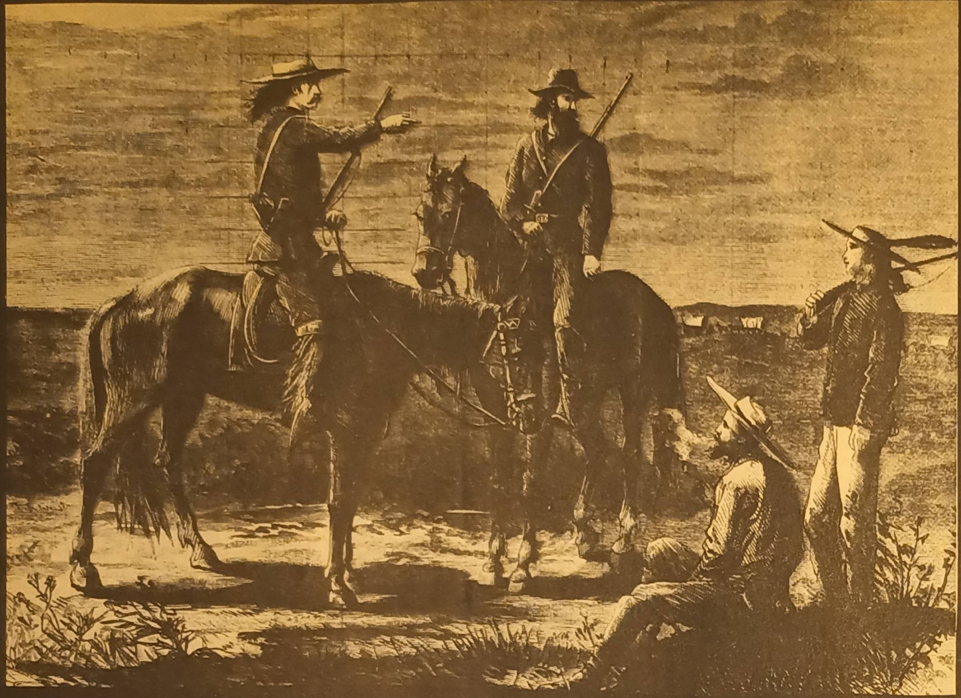
Windy shrewdly gave him plenty of time to imagine that he (Windy) might have run away. Sure enough, a stooped figure eventually slipped into view against the rock. Windy immediately flattened a bullet above his head.

Stone chips fell around him as he once more disappeared into the big rocks against the mesa's base. Windy, moving fast against the ground, shifted a hundred feet closer in, while spurts of powder flame erupted from low on either side. Echoes of the rifle crashes resounded from the mesa walls.

AS DESPERATELY as the unknown one had tried to get him, Windy still refrained from shooting to kill. Opening up with his rifle he emptied the magazine, but his aim was toward the rock

(Continued on page 40)

Denebeto Valley where E. G. Williams (right) and others before him discovered garnets.



MESSENGER TO THE INDIANS

Comstock knew where to find them and how to parley with them—and though his final mission led him to a Cheyenne village and death, there is room for doubt about who killed him

By JOSEPH W. SNELL

Photos Courtesy Author

GEORGE A. CUSTER called him "perfect in horsemanship, fearless in manner, a splendid hunter and a gentleman by instinct, as modest and unassuming as he was brave." Gen. P. H. Sheridan rated him as one of his top three scouts during the summer Indian campaigns of 1868. Though he had never met him, Maj. (Bvt. Col.) George A. Forsyth, one of the heroes of the Battle of Beecher Island, thought him the best frontier scout the army had.

Lieut. Fredrick Beecher, who himself was killed at Beecher Island in eastern Colorado and for whom that sandy little sanctuary was named, was for many months his immediate superior. He "has in that time shown himself better qualified than most (both in character and knowledge) who hold such a position," Beecher wrote in February 1868.

The man these reliable and now famous Indian fighters were describing was William Averill Comstock, thought by some to be a half-breed who had never traveled east of Fort Leavenworth but who actually was a member of a prominent Michigan family.

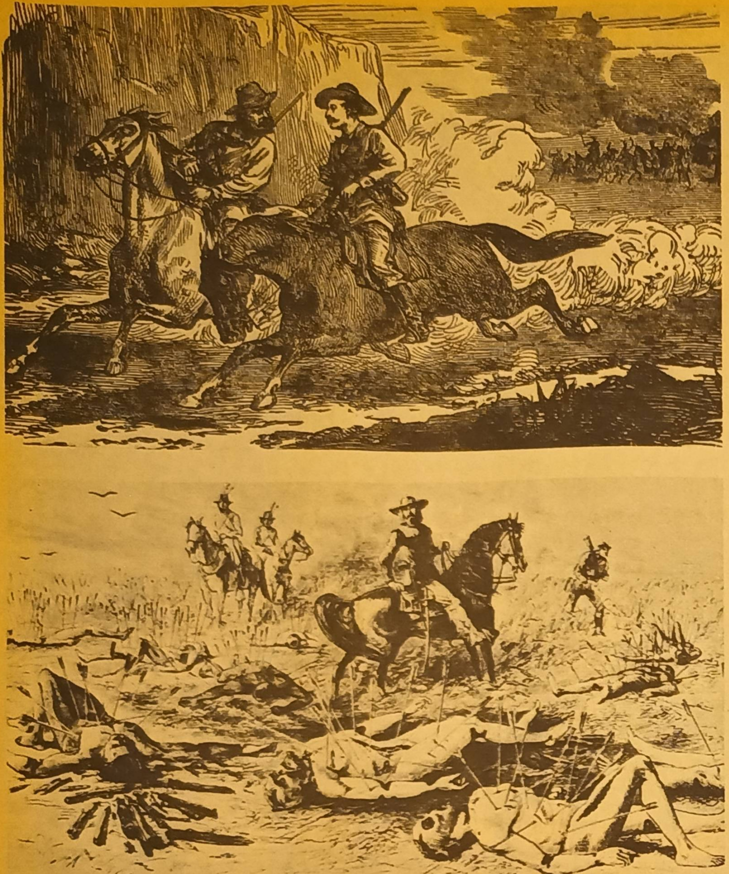
He had been born at Comstock, Michigan in 1842, son of Gen. Horace H. Comstock, founder of the town. His mother was Sarah Sabina Cooper, daughter of Judge Isaac Cooper of Cooperstown, New York and niece of James Fenimore Cooper, the author. Besides William there were three girls, Sarah, Julia, and Frances and a brother, Isaac, who died in infancy before William was born.

Comstock's mother died when he was four. His father then moved to Otsego, Michigan and remarried. Sometime after May 1854 the future frontiersman apparently went to live with his sister Sarah and her husband, Eleazar Wakeley, in Wisconsin. When Wakeley moved to Omaha, Nebraska in the spring of 1857, having been appointed as associate justice of the territorial supreme court, Comstock may have accompanied him. He was in "Pike's Peak, Nebraska Territory" in 1861 when his father died.

By 1867 he was a noted character on the frontier and his name appeared in local newspapers with some regularity. The Junction City, Kansas *Weekly Union*, February 9, 1867 considered him an authority on the West though it was mistaken about his heritage. Or was the *Union* a victim of Comstock's western humor?

"A few days ago we had a little talk with Mr. William Comstock, an Indian interpreter and Government guide," stated the editor, George W. Martin. "Mr. Comstock was born near where Fort Wallace now stands which is some fifteen or twenty miles east of the western line of Kansas, and is acquainted with all that vast region from the British possessions south to Texas. He is particularly acquainted with that region

Custer's scouts, opposite page, from *Harper's Weekly*, June 29, 1867, are, from left, Will Comstock, said to be the best interpreter on the Plains; Ed Guerrier, half-Cheyenne; Thomas Atkins, courier; and Kincade, courier. Below, a Cheyenne Indian camp in 1871.



"Will Comstock and His Companion Pursued by Indians," top, an engraving from Custer's *Wild Life on the Plains and Horrors of Indian Warfare*. Below, Comstock has led Custer to the scene of the Kidder massacre in this engraving from Custer's *My Life on the Plains*.

lying on the west line of the State. From his account the western one hundred miles of the State are worthless, but he says there is not a foot of soil on the plains but what can be made productive by irrigation. . . .

"He is an enthusiast on the subject of the West and says his knowledge of the country justifies the belief that the main body of the people of Kansas will exist before many years, west of Junction City, in the valleys of the Republican, Saline, Solomon and Smoky Hill and their numerous tributaries."

Next month the Denver *Rocky Mountain News* reported that Comstock was in that town, having pursued a "desperado known as Sam Gates" all the way from Fort Wallace. Gates, it seems, had assisted four soldiers to desert their units. Comstock and his companion, a Mexican named Escalera, arrested Gates in Denver on Sunday, March 17, 1867.

The editor of the *News* apparently was impressed with Comstock's appearance and reputation. "Mr. Comstock is a slight but active looking man," he wrote, "who glories in the rough peculiarities of the border adventure. He has been frequently mentioned by the press as giving opinions of the temper and probable designs of the Indians. . . . We believe he is the same, also, that is mentioned by Bayard Taylor [a prominent author] in his book on Colorado as 'Hell-roaring Bill, from Bitter Creek'."

THE BEST DESCRIPTION of William Comstock was given by W. E. Webb in an article he wrote for the November 1875 issue of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. His story, "Air Towns and Their Inhabitants," mainly concerned short-lived Kansas frontier villages along the line of the Union Pacific, Eastern Division—towns such as Coyote, Monument and Sheridan—all hell-raising end-of-track boom towns. It was at Sheridan that Webb knew Comstock and though the author suffered from misinformation concerning the scout's background, his personal observations were keen.

"The most remarkable man, as a specimen of plain-draft, that I ever met on the frontier was Comstock," he wrote. Webb further declared that the scout had learned the rudiments of his future pursuit while yet a child, with revolvers and knives his playthings. Unlike the great army of pretenders who had flashed across the pages of western fiction, he was an Indian scout and soldier's guide after the pattern which went out of fashion with Daniel Boone.

"From the sole of his nervous foot to the locks of his raven hair he stood out a bold man in council and a sleuth-hound on the trail," Webb continued. "This scout was the only one I ever knew who would execute the daring task of riding into hostile Indian camps with messages from United States officers. Was a request for a council with the tribes to be sent, he bore it. Alone, on the back of a fleet mule, a compromise himself between the Indian and the pale-face, he would take his way out into the wild waste and fade against the horizon on a mission the further end of which seemed to lie at the feet of death."

Describing Comstock as small and sinewy in person and dark in feature Webb felt the scout's power lay in his eyes. Large and wild in their light, they seemed to flash over and around a man, as if searching for a revolver at his back. Webb thought that Comstock's mother was a Delaware.

"I first saw him while standing in the door of a stage ranch at Pond Creek [the town near Fort Wallace]," Webb stated. "He paused for an instant in front while on his way with a message from the commandant at Wallace to a hostile tribe on the Republican. Stopping but a moment to speak with Nichols, the ranch-keeper, he leveled those shining eyes at me with the precision a man would have used with field-glasses. It was but an instant, and he was off, yet I felt that I had been photographed, and could be hunted the world over by him did he ever have occasion. I thought of it afterward as the most unpleasant optical experience of my life."

Comstock was a superstitious person who regarded nearly everything as either "good medicine" or bad. He brooded in silence and fancied evil influences existed in certain signs and days. Webb told of one instance in which he foretold to a day the death of some woodchoppers. These men had been cutting down a small grove of trees—a patch of foliage on a hundred-mile desert. Comstock warned them to beware, stating that the trees had for ages been the resting-places for the dead of the tribes crossing there. Corpses were lashed to limbs of a tree, or stretched out on a high platform underneath. Notwithstanding the warning, the choppers applied their axes, and the scout assured them sadly that at the next full moon the savages would avenge the sacrilege. The lumbermen laughed; no Indians had been in the country for months and the wood could be safely housed in the fort before they knew that the first axe had sounded its alarm.

When the next full moon cast its light down among the fallen trees its beams fell upon the ghastly faces of two dead choppers. "Some wandering savage, flitting by like a shadow, had seen the white men at their task and carried the news to his distant village," Webb concluded. Comstock's knowledge of Indian character and habits was unsurpassed.

Officers' quarters at Fort Wallace, Kansas in 1865.

Courtesy Kansas Historical Society

DURING the summer of 1867, Comstock was guide for Custer's Seventh Cavalry as it rode up and down the prairies in futile pursuit of marauding Cheyennes. He and Custer were particularly close and messed together in the field. Perhaps they were drawn together by their mutual love of dogs. During the campaign Comstock was accompanied by his large dog, Cuss. Theodore R. Davis, the correspondent, was along too, and he left his impression of Comstock as a man who was "one of the best riders on the plains, with which he is probably more familiar than any other white man who roams over them." In addition, Davis, by then an experienced plainsman himself, considered Comstock to be one of the best buffalo hunters in the West. Only General Frederick West Lander possibly exceeded him.

William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody told the story of a buffalo killing contest which once took place between him and Comstock. Just when this contest took place, or exactly where, is not known, but it may have been in the fall of 1867 or spring of 1868.

According to Cody the contest was a gala affair and the railroad ran a special excursion train all the way out from St. Louis. "We were to hunt one day of eight hours," he wrote later, "beginning at eight o'clock in the morning, and closing at four o'clock in the afternoon. The wager was five hundred dollars a side, and the man who should kill the greater number of buffaloes from on horseback was to be declared the winner."

The hunt took place in Logan County, Kansas, about twenty miles east of Sheridan, a town which no longer exists. Cody estimated the spectators at well over a hundred ladies and gentlemen. His own wife and his baby girl, Arta, came to watch the bloody event.

Fortunately there was a large herd nearby and it was agreed that Cody and Comstock would ride into the same herd at the same time, each followed by a referee, and make a run, killing buffalo as fast as possible. The excursionists who buggied out from the railroad were safely deposited out of sight of the herd so that they would not frighten the animals.

Cody was astride his favorite pony, Brigham, and was armed with a .50 Springfield. Comstock was also well mounted but carried a lighter, faster Henry repeating rifle. It was Cody's practice to start his portion of the herd circling and kill them as they passed by. Comstock merely pursued the herd and killed on the chase. Apparently, if Cody's account is accurate, his method was the more successful for in the first run he killed thirty-eight beasts while Comstock killed only twenty-three. In addition Cody's carcasses were all together while Comstock's were spread over a three-mile run. Comstock and Cody now retired to the crowd of admirers for a quick round of champagne cocktails—"a good drink on the Kansas prairies," as Cody put it.

Now another herd of buffalo approached and the two hunters rode out once more. This time Cody killed eighteen and Comstock fourteen. The total score was fifty-six to thirty-seven in favor of Buffalo Bill. Once more the excursionists approached and once more champagne was drunk and a light lunch served. Feeling rather cocky, either from the wine or the morning's kill, Cody decided to put on an exhibition for the ladies by riding into the herd without saddle or bridle. "This had raised the excitement to fever heat among the excursionists," he recalled, "and I remember one fair lady who endeavored to prevail upon me not to attempt it."

Bareback and bridleless Cody this time slaughtered thirteen animals bringing his total to sixty-nine while Comstock succeeded in killing forty-six. "As it was now late in the afternoon," according to Cody, "Comstock and his backers gave up the idea that he could beat me, and thereupon the referees declared me the winner of the match, as well as the champion buffalo-hunter of the plains."

Strangely enough considerable research by several historians has failed to turn up any contemporary evidence of this fantastic battle, and we must rely on Cody's 1879 autobiography for the details.

WHILE SERVING as guide for Custer, Comstock found the mutilated bodies of Lieutenant Lyman S. Kidder and his small command who had been killed in northwest Kansas. Comstock may have intended to guide Kidder's father to the massacre and burial site next winter for in a letter written December 9, 1867, Capt. (Bvt. Col.) H. C. Bankhead, post commander at Fort Wallace suggested to Kidder that the scout could guide him "in January or any time of the year." Bankhead also mentioned that Comstock thought he could identify the lieutenant's body by a shirt which corresponded to a piece of material sent to General Custer by the elder Kidder.

Whether Comstock did accompany Judge John P. Kidder when he located his son's grave in February 1868 is not known. In all probability he did not for the month before he had shot and killed

(Continued on page 38)

"YELLOW KID" and the WISDOM TOOTH

Who can tear down a spider web and not feel a little bit sorry for the spider? And most likely, you'll feel a sympathetic twinge or two for this story's hard-working villain!

By AGNES WRIGHT SPRING

Photo Courtesy Author

TRAVEL BY transcontinental train sixty years ago was quite leisurely. There was plenty of opportunity to meet congenial persons and to make friends in the observation car or smoker.

Will Langtree, president of the Sage Creek National Bank, a member of the local school board and president of the town's chamber of commerce, thoroughly enjoyed the business trips from his Wyoming home to Chicago.

One of the highlights of the annual Chicago visit always was seeing the banker's old schoolmate, Detective Tim Murray. Langtree had always prided himself on his ability to size up a man and had almost become a detective himself.

One morning Langtree stepped aboard the branch line which ran from Sage Creek to Omaha where connections were made to Chicago. He was soon comfortably stretched out in the almost-empty smoking car reviewing each detail of a business proposition which he was going to Chicago to investigate. He realized that the $14,000 investment which he had under consideration was not large nor was it what you might call insignificant.

The next morning in Omaha, Langtree was one of a group waiting to go through the railway station gates to the train. Suddenly he was attracted to a man and woman heading toward the gates. They were immaculately but not lavishly dressed. The man was well set-up with a clean-cut, almost handsome face. His companion was even more striking in face and carriage. The banker admired their genuine indifference to those about them. Then the gates opened and the crowd surged forward.

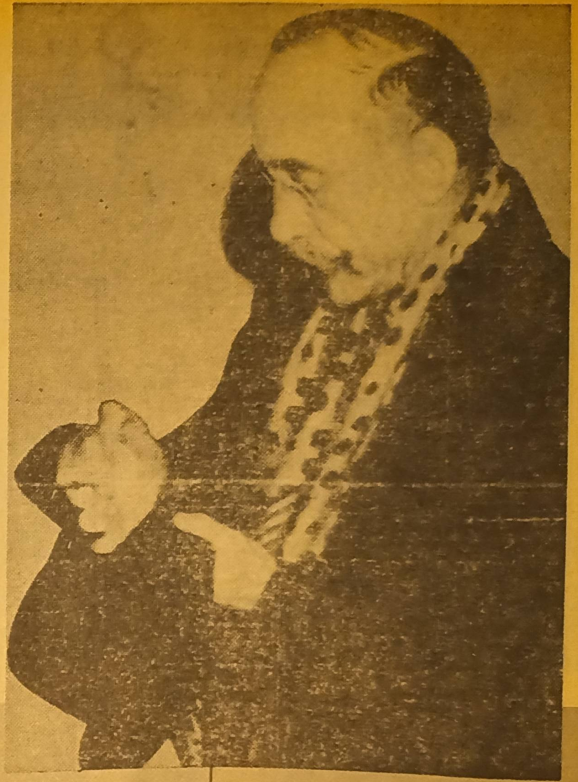
Langtree was just settling himself in his Pullman section when he saw the porter coming into the car with a suitcase and two bags which were almost completely covered with stamps of various hotels and steamship lines. Behind him came the good looking strangers who took the section across the aisle from him.

The train was hardly underway when the man excused himself and departed

(Continued on page 44)

Chicago's Wabash Avenue looking north from Monroe about the time banker Will Langtree of Wyoming was in town and in danger of being fleeced!

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

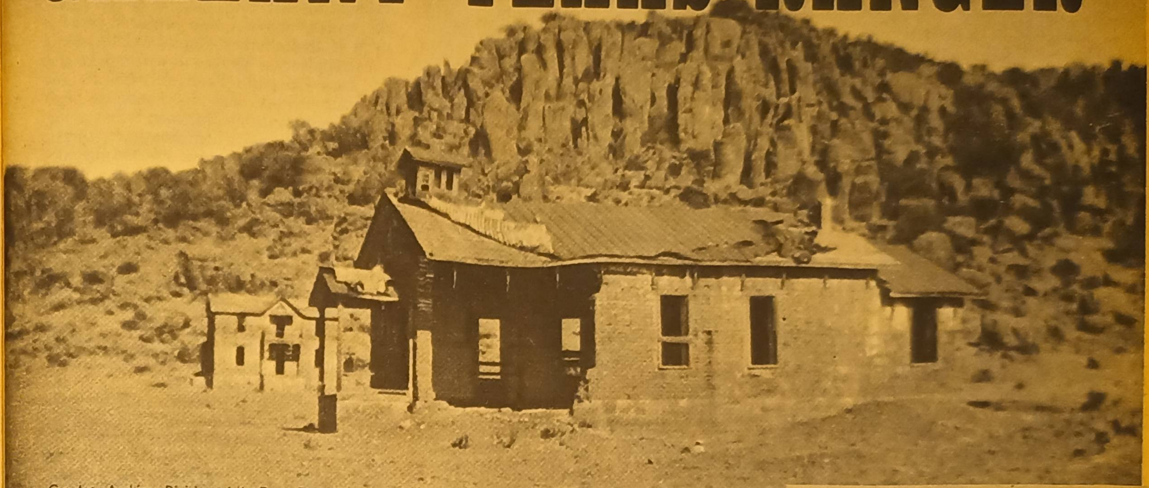


Joseph (Yellow Kid) Weil, right, in 1941. Below, State and Madison Streets in the Windy City that westerner Langtree enjoyed visiting so much.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

SPECIAL!
FROM OUR 1926
Frontier
Times

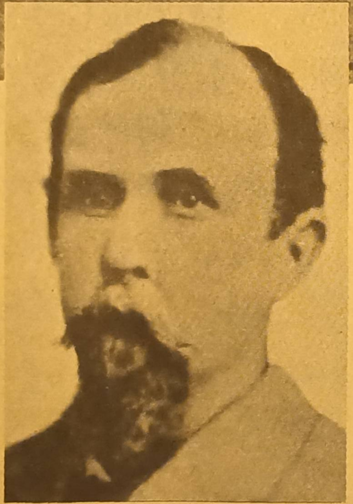
NEAL COLDWELL – GALLANT TEXAS RANGER



Courtesy Archives Division of the Texas State Library
The ruins of Fort Davis, Texas, 1960.

He served when the going was toughest—the days when there were many deaths but few funerals and a man's grave might be dug with a Bowie knife

Captain Neal Coldwell was born in Dade County, Missouri, May 2, 1844, and died at his home near Center Point, Texas, November 7, 1925. His father, Thomas Coldwell, was a soldier under General Jackson in the War of 1812, and participated in the famous battle of New Orleans, fought on January 18, 1815. The best sketch of the life of Captain Neal Coldwell, who became famous as a frontiersman and Texas Ranger, is given in A. J. Sowell's book, *Texas Indian Fighters*, from which this sketch is taken.



Frontier Times (Old Series) Photo
Captain Neal Coldwell

IN 1850 THOMAS COLDWELL immigrated to California, going the overland route across the Plains. His was quite a large outfit, consisting of five wagons with five yoke of oxen in each, and one spring wagon and ambulance for the members of the family to ride in. Besides this he carried extra horses for the vehicles and 100 head of Missouri cattle. In his pay also, as guards, were fifteen men under the command of Captain Stockton.

This was a long, tedious trip, and fraught with many dangers and hardships. Many Indians were met on the route, but most of them were friendly. Near Carson River, however, one night a hostile band made a raid and stole all of their horses and part of the cattle. Next morning the guards followed them on foot and succeeded in getting the cattle back, but not the horses, and they now had to work oxen to everything. Finally Mr. Coldwell bought several head of horses from some friendly Indians and continued his journey, but was followed and overtaken by another band, who claimed the horses, saying they had been stolen from them by the ones who had sold them. There was no alternative but to give them up, and the Indians drove them away.

Neal Coldwell was then but six years of age, but distinctly remembers all of these things and says one circumstance which made a vivid impression on his mind was crossing the desert, which consumed two days and nights of travel. It was a sandy country with no water on the route, and was strewn with abandoned wagons and other possessions of those who had gone over the trail previously. Feather beds had been ripped to save the cloth, and feathers had been scattered promiscuously across the sandy wastes by the winds. He saw men chopping spokes out of wagon wheels for fuel, and yokes and chains were lying in front of abandoned wagons where they had been dropped and the given-out teams carried on to water and grass. These wagons were public property for anyone who was disposed to pick them up as the owners never returned for them, not being worth a trip back in the deep sand to recover them.

The elder Coldwell exchanged wagons several times, finding some he liked better than his own among the hundreds that strewed the desert plain. Twelve miles from Grass Valley an interprising individual was found by the roadside selling grass and water, the latter at $1 per gallon. The Coldwell family finally reached their destination, and Mr. Coldwell went into the stock business. His cattle were the first Missouri stock to cross the plains, and some of them sold for $150 per head. None but Spanish stock had been here previously. Gold dust was the circulating medium in trade and each dealer, in whatsoever business he was engaged, had his scales to weigh gold dust.

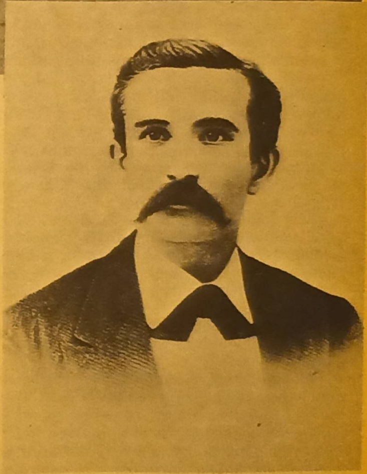
In 1852 the elder Coldwell died, and in 1856 his widow went back with her family to Tennessee, her native state. Here young Neal attended the Black Grove and Newmarket schools until 1859, when his mother with her family came to Texas. They reached Kerr County in 1860.

DURING THE progress of the Civil War, young Coldwell enlisted in the company of Captain Eugene B. Millet, 32nd Texas Cavalry, the regiment commanded by Col. P. C. Wood. Their field of operation was in Louisiana, opposing the invading army under General Banks. He participated in all of the battles and skirmishes, thirty-two in number, with the exception of Mansfield, his last fight being at Yellow Bayou. After the war Captain Coldwell came back to Kerr County and engaged in farming and stockraising.

A Frontier Battalion was organized in 1875 to operate against the Indians, and Coldwell was appointed captain of Company F; Pat Dolan was first lieutenant, F. C. Nelson, second, and there were seventy-five enlisted men. There were six companies in all, the whole being under the command of Major John B. Jones. Their station (Captain's Coldwell's men) was the headwaters of the Guadalupe River. Their scouting territory embraced the country from the mouth of the Pulliam Prong of the Nueces to the mouth of the South Fork of the Llano, where Junction City now is. Much scouting was done, and with such energy that the Indians were kept in check.

On one occasion George Danner, William Baker and Joe Moss were camped with a wagon four miles east of the Frio Water Hole, hunting game and wild honey. They had found a bee cave in a gorge and were robbing it when they were attracted by the barking of a dog at their wagon on the hill. Climbing out to see what was the matter, they discovered a band of nine Indians who had taken their horses and were carrying them off, the dog following and barking at them. The distance to the Indians was about 600 yards, but Joe Moss had a buffalo gun and taking a pop at them, he killed one of their horses. The Indians then killed the dog and rode on.

At this time Baker was out on a hunt and riding their only remaining horse. When he returned and learned the situation he at once rode to the camp of Captain Coldwell, nine miles distant, and informed him of the presence of Indians. Coldwell at once set out to the scene with thirty men. The trail of the Indians was taken up at 5 o'clock and followed until night. It led south toward the head of the Sabinal River and the trailing was tedious and slow, being in a timbered country abounding in high grass. The rangers camped on the divide at the head of the river and were moving again as soon as the trail could be seen the following morning.



Courtesy University of Oklahoma Library
Major John B. Jones, commander of the Frontier Battalion of Texas Rangers from 1874 to 1881.

As they turned down into the head of the canyon a belled mare and colt were seen, and had they known the situation here they could have waited and caught the Indians. The latter had only gone down in the valley to camp by the water, and had come back to the divide next morning but not on their own trail of the previous evening. The Indians crossed over into another valley and came out near enough to see the mare, which they captured, but killed the colt. While they were doing this Captain Coldwell and his men were trailing them to where they camped and back to where the dead colt was found. Part of this time only a ridge intervened between the Indians and the rangers.

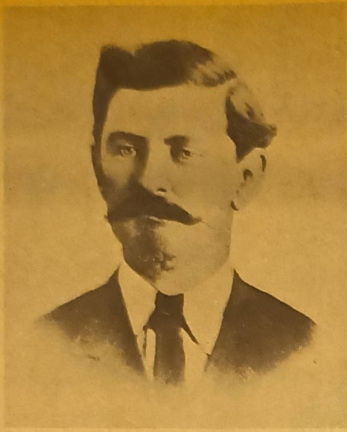
The trail now led down the divide between Cypress Creek and the Frio, which came in above the town of Leakey. Here on a high point the Indians stopped for noon, having a good view of the country for several miles. Evidently they saw the rangers on their trail and hastily decamped, which fact was indicated by signs of cooked meat, etc. They intended raiding Frio Canyon that night, for as yet they had only one horse besides those they were riding. This one they had stolen from Sam Larrymore on the head of the Pedernales. At the noon camp of the Indians the captain left the pack mules with Sgt. W. G. Coston and five men with orders to follow on, while he and the others pushed on as rapidly as the rough nature of the country would admit.

TO GIVE an idea of the difficulties which had to be surmounted in crossing these rocky mountains, the following incidents will be a fair sample: In many places the rangers had to lead their horses, and in one of these Captain Coldwell was leading his horse by the rope with the bridle reins over the horn of the saddle. Coming to a four-foot ledge, the horses had to make a powerful spring to clear, and all succeeded but the captain's horse. When he made his spring the bridle reins tightened and pulled him backwards, and he fell in such a position with his feet uphill that he had to be turned over before he could get up. At a similar place one of the pack mules with Sergeant Coston's party fell backwards and rolled to the foot of the hill with his pack.

The Indians were crowded so close that the water in the little branches which they had crossed was still muddy when the rangers arrived. If there had been any open country they would have been caught, but all was brakes, mountains and canyons. Much blood was on the trail where the Indians had spurred their horses.

On the West Prong of the Frio two men were seen some distance off in a little valley, and not knowing whether they were Indians or white men and wanting to be sure to get them if the former, Captain Coldwell deployed his men and completely surrounded them. When the cordon was drawn close and they were caught in the circle, it was discovered they were white men. The latter were greatly surprised to see armed men riding toward them from every direction, and at first were alarmed. They were busy cutting a bee tree, and had not noticed the approach of the rangers until they were close upon them. One of the men was named Ragsdale.

The rangers made another dry camp. They had no provisions, but about 10 o'clock in the night Sergeant Coston came up with the pack mules and they got something to eat. The Indians had the advantage of the night when the trail could no longer be followed, and got another good start ahead. They were followed until 3 o'clock on the following evening when a heavy rain came up and obliterated all signs of the trail. Captain Coldwell then went down the Nueces, hoping to find some sign but could not do so, and the pursuit was abandoned. The Indians were not heard of anymore.



Courtesy Archives Division of the Texas State Library

First Lieutenant Pat Dolan.

IN DECEMBER it became necessary to reduce the ranger force, and the company of Captain Coldwell was cut down to forty men and the lieutenants thrown out. Soon after the company was reduced Captain Coldwell was sent down into the Rio Grande counties to stop the depredations of bandits. The territory to scout over was from Ringgold Barracks to Brownsville. By vigilant work the outlaws were kept in check during the winter.

The command was then ordered in to be disbanded, and Captain Coldwell was instructed to turn over state government property—mules, etc., but with the view of organizing a new company for further operations against Indians and lawless characters. The home of Captain Coldwell was near Center Point in Kerr County, and here he had the government mules, with a man employed to look after them. They were turned out during the day and rounded up and penned again at night. On one occasion a mule failed to show up, having strayed, and that night the Indians made a raid through the valley and carried him off, also a horse belonging to Monroe Surber. Captain Coldwell followed the Indians far to the west over the rugged mountains, but failed to overtake them as they scattered and went various ways.

At this time Lon Spencer and a companion were out on the head draws of the South Llano hunting game and mustangs when they saw two Indians coming towards them a long way off. When they came within gunshot each hunter selected his man to shoot at, and both fired. Spencer killed his Indian, but the other man missed, so one got away. Now it happened that these two Indians had the mule and horse which were stolen at Center Point, and Spencer brought back the recaptured property and also the scalp of the Indian and his rigging.

In 1876 another company was organized with Captain Coldwell as commander. Their scouting territory was the same as before. On one scout of ten days they came upon some cattlemen at Painted Rock on the South Llano, who were carrying a herd to Kansas. They informed the rangers that the Indians had made a raid on another cow outfit at Green Lake, six miles above, and captured eleven head of their horses. Captain Coldwell at once repaired to the scene with his scouts and took the trail. Their only chance for carrying water was in canteens, and the captain cautioned his men to be saving with water. It was warm weather (April), and the supply soon gave out. On the second day a dry camp was made in a draw, and the men were suffering very much with thirst. They looked bad—skin dry and lips swollen. During the night they were very restless and moaning in their sleep. Some scratched in the dry gravel of the draw, trying to find moisture. Aleck Merritt, the trailer, had walked a great deal in following the trail and had long since used up all of his water, and was suffering more than the others, who had ridden their horses.

Captain Coldwell and Dr. Nowlin were lying on their blankets together, a little apart from the rest, and were commenting on the long distance Merritt had walked and trailed and expressed an opinion that he was certainly more thirsty than the balance. The captain had preserved some water in his canteen for an extreme emergency if it came, but now called Merritt and made known to him the fact, and offered him some of the water and explained to him the reason. The unselfish ranger refused it because he thought it would look wrong to accept it when the other boys had none, and went back to his pallet and suffered on through the long night and until 9 o'clock the following day.

When water was found the men could not very well be restrained, and many of them drank until they were sick. Eighteen Indians had camped there the night before, as was indicated by the imprint of their bodies in the rank grass where they slept. Just below, in the same little valley, a like number had spent the night and held a bunch of horses. It is likely well enough that the rangers in the famished and weakened condition they were in, did not come into contact with this band numbering thirty-six to their twelve. The scout party was held here two days.

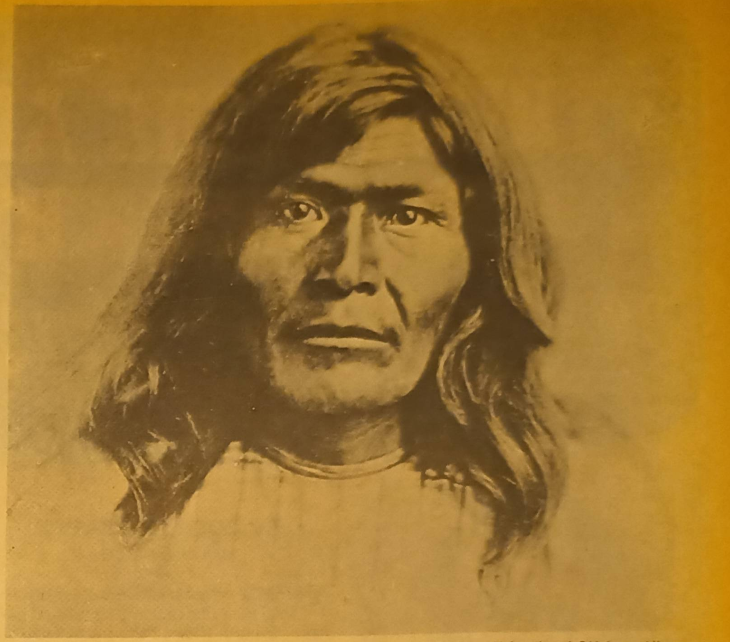
GEORGE BEAKLEY'S horse had given out and was not able to keep on the trail of the Indians and the captain did not want to leave him alone, so a return toward camp was made, Beakley riding a pack mule and slowly leading his jaded horse. The captain had flankers on both sides while on the move, and one of these, William Layton, became lost from the command. He was seen during the greater part of the day but finally he was missed, and the command halted. The captain got on an elevated place and searched for him with a spy glass, but could not discover him. Coldwell hated to leave the man, but it was useless to go back to hunt for him, as they could not even guess where to look. The grass was fired with the hope that the smoke might be seen and to some extent guide him, and the scout moved on. The men would soon be out of water again, and it was twenty-five miles back to it.

Provisions were left in a tree, so that if the lost ranger should strike their trail he could find it. Two nights passed before anything was seen or heard of him and he was about given up as lost, when on the third day he overtook them. He had crossed the trail of the rangers once and did not see it, and turned back when he discovered that he was going too low down the country. His horse took the trail when he came to where the grass was burned, and followed it as true as the needle to the pole. It was at the next water that the provisions were left in the tree, and by the time he reached that place they were very acceptable to the hungry ranger. Layton had not been in the service very long. An old-time Texas Ranger would not have gotten into such a scrape as that.

The following December Captain Coldwell was put in command of Company A, which acted as escort to Major Jones and was almost constantly employed in going from one post to another, inspecting, paying off, etc.

In 1877 Major Jones, with Captain Coldwell's command, and Pat Dolan's and Frank Moore's companies were ordered to concentrate. Captain Dolan was in Nueces Canyon and Captain Frank Moore was on the Llano where Junction City is now. The purpose of assembling the rangers was to round up the whole country around the heads of the Nueces and Llano, and arrest every man in it. This part of the country had become headquarters for all the desperadoes, outlaws, horse and cattle thieves, and fugitives from justice in the whole Southwest and from the East; and the purpose of apprehending every man was to be certain to get the right ones, as the rangers could not distinguish the guilty parties.

Each man was examined and had to give a satisfactory account of himself before he was turned loose. Forty men out of this round-up proved to be the persons wanted, and they were carried to Junction City and there confined in shackles in a place called the "bull pen." Junction City was just being laid out. There were only a few houses there—no jail or courthouse—although it was designated as the county seat of Kimble County. Judge Blackburn had arrived there to hold court, and the rangers remained to give protection in case any of the outlawry kind gave trouble. But everything passed off smoothly during this first term of court in Kimble County. Hearings were held under a large live oak tree, and to give color to this primitive court of justice in the wilderness, a swarm of wild bees were working in the tree under which were assembled judge and jury, lawyers and witnesses. The arrested men were all turned over to the civil authorities.



Courtesy University of Oklahoma Library

Apache Chief Victorio.

AFTER THIS Captain Coldwell went to Frio Town and operated in surrounding counties, capturing outlaws and desperate characters in that part of the country. During this service he and his scouts apprehended more than forty men and brought them to justice.

The last rangers were different from the first—the Indian-fighting rangers. Many of them were detectives from other states and different parts of Texas. The first ones were of the cowboy style—good riders, trailers, and shots, wearing leggings, many of them, and buckskin. The last ones, however, did splendid work in their line, which was fraught with as much danger as fighting Indians. This service was continued by Captain Coldwell until 1879.

Governor Roberts was in the executive chair during the last mentioned date, and Major Jones was made adjutant-general and Captain Coldwell quartermaster of the Frontier Battalion. His business was to make tours of inspection, furnish rations, and recommend changes of men or companies from one place to another. During this service, information was received that lawless characters were operating south of Fort Davis in the Chenati Mountains where there were no rangers. General Jones ordered Sergeant Ed Sieker to take four men and one Mexican guide and repair to the scene. As these men figure in a fight with the outlaws in which one of them lost his life, their names will be given: Sam Henry, Tom Carson, L. B. Caruthers, a man named Bingham, and the Mexican, name not known.

At Fort Davis, Sergeant Sieker learned that the most daring of the desperadoes were four in number, one of whom was Jesse Evans from New Mexico. They would rob stores in daylight in Fort Davis and terrorize the citizens generally, and the latter had offered a reward of $500 for their capture. The rangers learned through a Negro named Louis, who occupied a neutral position between the two parties, that the outlaws' strong hold was in the Chenati Mountains. He also told the latter that the rangers were after them. The outlaws believed the Negro was wholly on their side and that their position was not known. They told him if only four rangers came to hunt for them he need not put himself to the trouble to inform them, but to keep them posted in regard to a larger force.

From the fort the rangers went south about eighty miles to near the Rio Grande on a little creek in the Chenati Range, and there, while hunting for trails, discovered four men on horseback above them. The outlaws, for such they were, turned and ran, and soon commenced firing at the rangers who were in pursuit. This settled their identity, and Sergeant Sieker and his men put their horses to the utmost speed to overhaul them, firing as they went.

The chase lasted two miles, until the outlaws came to a mountain which was flat on top. On the opposite side was a ledge of rock four feet in height which ran around the circle of the mountain. The fugitives went up the mountain, across its flat crest, down the ledge to near the base, and there dismounted, tied their horses, and came back to the ledge and took a position behind it to fight the rangers.

When Sergeant Sieker and his men arrived at the mountain and found out the position of the desperadoes, they went up near the crest, dismounted, tied their horses, and advanced to assault the position on foot. The Mexican had stopped

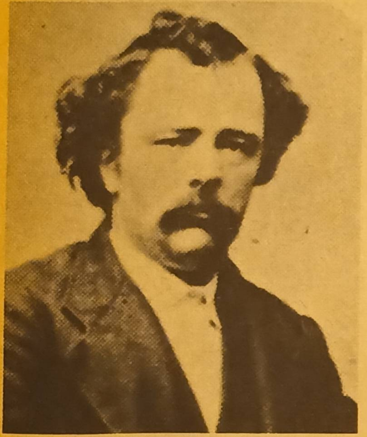
(Continued on page 58)

THERE WERE ALL KINDS OF GUNFIGHTERS

. . . Bill Traynor was called one of the very few who was brave whatever the odds

Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

Troop A of the Arizona contingent to the Rough Riders in which Bill Traynor served.


Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

"Black Jack" Christian, outlaw leader.

By COLIN RICKARDS

Photos Courtesy Author

NOBODY remembers much about Bill Traynor, old-time train robber, cowboy, "Rough Rider," Arizona range detective and gunfighter. He drifted through his comparatively short life, dabbled alternately in outlawry and quasi-lawman status, served his country in Cuba, touched the lives of many men—but only briefly—and ended his days coughing up blood on the floor of a saloon. Those who spoke of him later remembered him in whichever capacity they had known him.

Joe Chisholm, rancher, who knew him in his last days, considered him a "brave man with a good record." Lorenzo Walters, old-timer and Arizona historian who knew him slightly and was acquainted with many of his friends, said that "he was credited with being one of the most deadly two-gun men in the Southwest, using either hand with equal dexterity." Harry Hughes, cowboy and rancher, saw him in his prime and liked him. "In spite of his past and his profession, Bill was all right," Hughes said. "He was the gunman I could trust, and that's saying a lot. He was one of the very few gunslingers who was brave in spite of the odds. Most of them were only brave when they were with their gang or when they had the drop on someone. When the cards looked bad they ran every time."

He was born William S. Traynor, probably in northern Texas or Indian Territory, for it was there, according to Texas cattleman James Emmit McCauley, that he got his first taste of outlawry.

"He was with the notorious Dalton Gang of outlaws on several of their robberies," McCauley reported. " 'Twas Bill Traynor who drove the wagon the time the Daltons robbed the train and carried the safe with the money in it off in a spring wagon. But somehow he was never suspicioned and went free."

Traynor wisely departed from Oklahoma and put considerable distance between himself and the lawmen who were gradually tightening a net around the Dalton gang. Harry Hughes heard later that Traynor hired his gun briefly to Texan cattlemen with nester problems and then drifted west to Arizona Territory, an untamed and rugged haven for those with his background and with his inclinations for other people's money. Initially, however, he worked as a cowboy in the Sulphur Springs Valley and around San Simon. He used his own name and quickly acquired the nickname of "Slim."

There were a goodly number of outlaws on the loose in the Territory and even more wild young cowboys tired of working for $40-a-month and found and eager for adventure and a little easy money.

Such a man was Grant Wheeler. So was his pal Joe George. In Bill Traynor they found a kindred spirit and together they planned to rob the Southern Pacific Railroad.

ON THE NIGHT of January 30, 1895, four masked men held up the westbound out of Willcox, Arizona and forced the engineer to stop the train and uncouple the express car. Their pattern was the tried and true one established by the James gang and a half hundred other successful train robbers over a period of more than a quarter of a century. They

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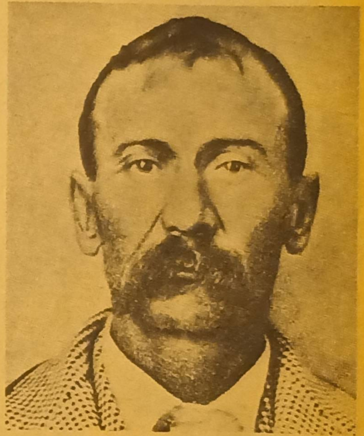
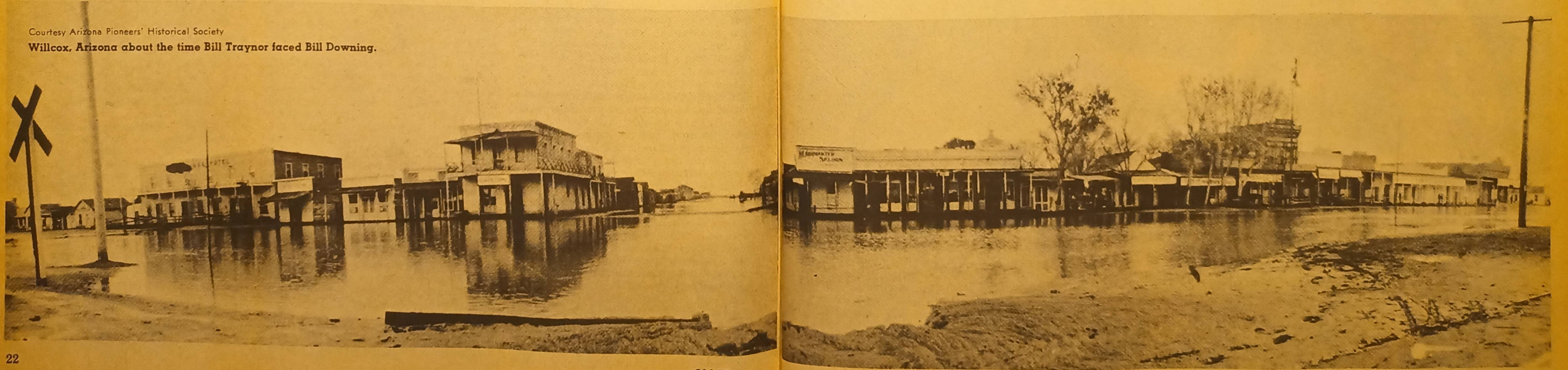
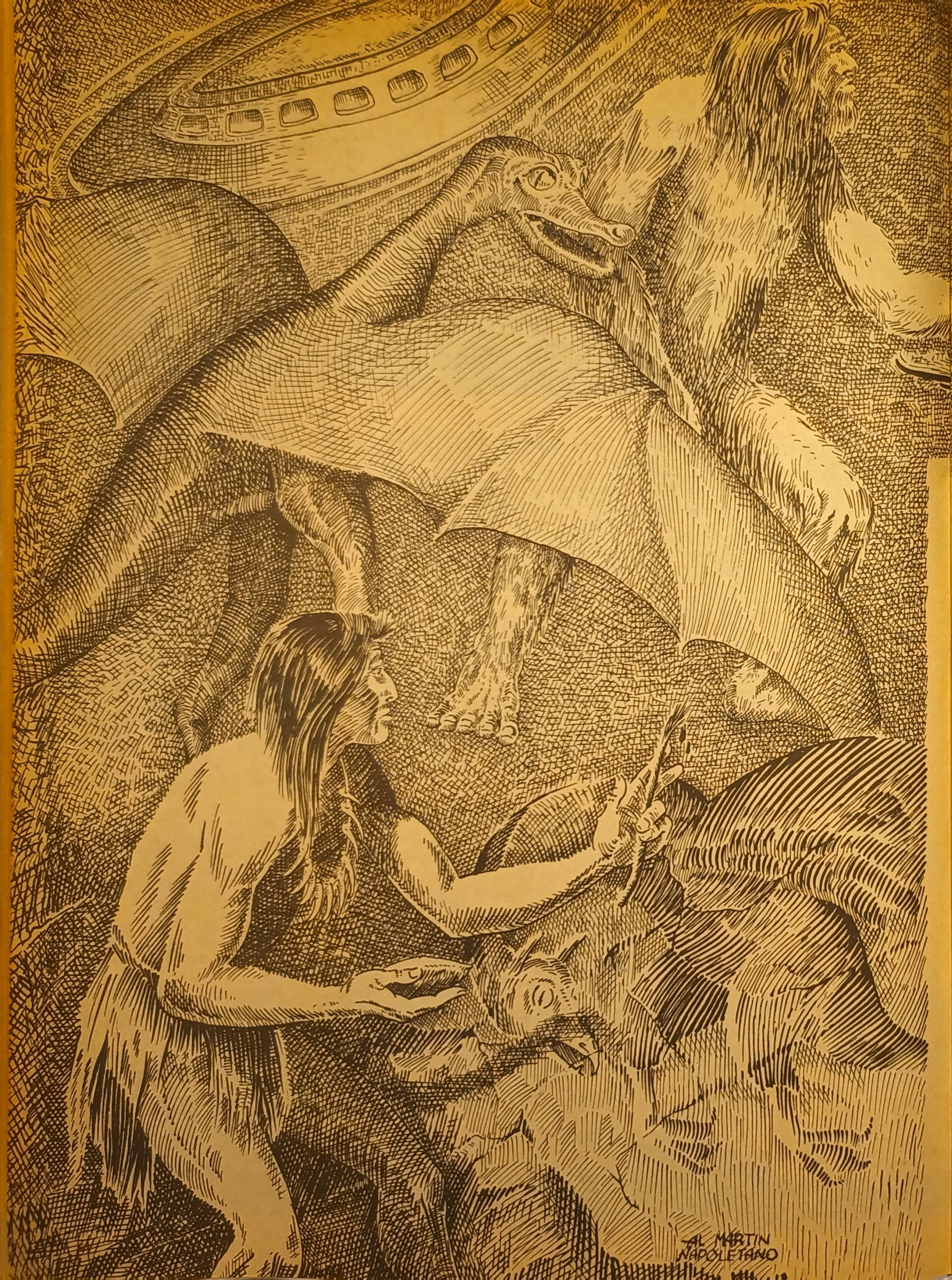
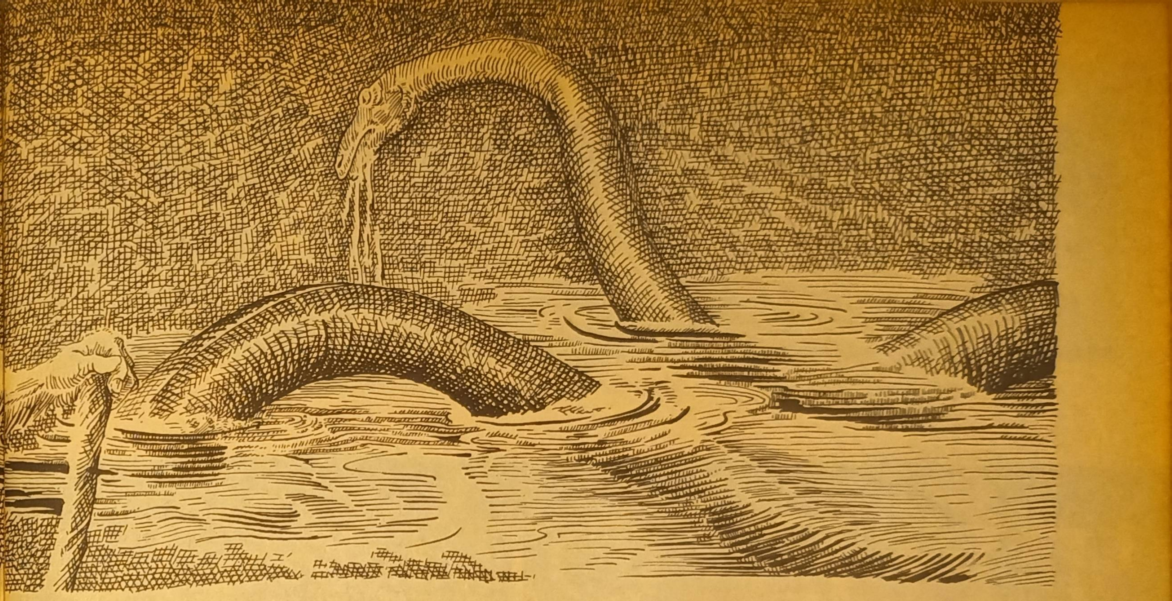

Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

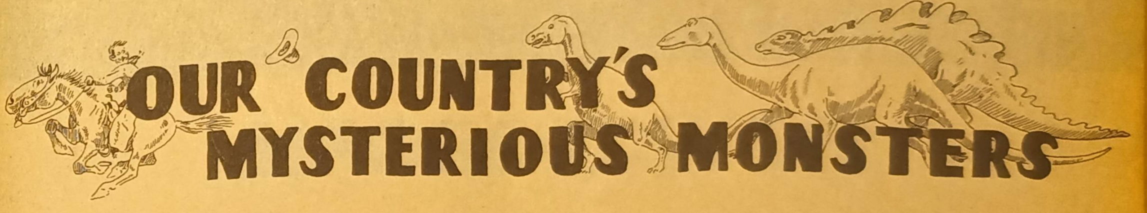
Bill Downing, outlaw and officer.


Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

Willcox, Arizona about the time Bill Traynor faced Bill Downing.







OUR COUNTRY'S MYSTERIOUS MONSTERS

Tall tales, big yarns and weird happenings were part of the Old West, too!

By J. K. PARRISH

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

"HEY!" one of the riders exclaimed in a low, cautious voice tinged with disbelief.

His companion, sensing danger from the other's tone, reined up and turned.

"Look yonder!"

He didn't have to point. The second man saw it, too. In fact, a man would have had to be blind to miss it. They stared, mouths agape, and their nape hair prickled in the eons-old animal reaction to peril.

Several hundred yards away an incredible, enormous flying creature glided through the air, feet extended, preparing to land. Lower and lower it drifted. Suddenly, braking, it flapped its huge wings, appendages so enormous that the resulting air turbulence created a respectable sandstorm beneath it. When it plopped to the ground it didn't fold the gargantuan wings but left them extended, just as a bird will when exhausted.

The horses were frantic with fear, rearing and neighing, eyes wide with fright. The men tried to quiet them but failed, for they were afraid, too, and the horses felt it.

This fantastic story is told in prosiac newspaper style in the paper with the perfect name—the Tombstone *Epitaph*. In the issue of April 26, 1890, in column six of page three, a newsstory reports an incident which either is one of the most important (and most ignored) events in the annals of science or is a complete and utter hoax. At this late date there is no way of finding out which, but don't dismiss it as the prank of a hard-drinking newspaperman or as a tall tale by some displaced Texan. It just may be possible that to these two cowboys fell the privilege—or the infamy—of slaying the last surviving Thunder Bird.

Almost every American Indian tribe from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego had a legend of a gigantic flying monster, so large that it darkened the sun. They believed that thunder was the noise of its wings as it lumbered through the heavens, and that it caused rain by flying through clouds and ripping them open. Indians of the Pacific Northwest said that the bird dined on whales, flying out over the ocean and plucking them out of the sea with huge talons; the Indians actually professed to have seen dead whales in treetops, their bodies scored by claw marks, where they had been dropped by the mighty Thunder Birds.

One of the many ceremonial dances of the New Mexico pueblo tribes is the eagle or Thunder Bird dance, in which the performers symbolize the relationship between the sacred bird and other sky powers. Navajos tell of a Cliff Monster, a tremendous aerial creature that lived high in the crags and carried off people whom it fed to its young. Some South American Indians believed that the bird was constantly at war with the powers living beneath the sea, particularly a horned serpent, and that it tore open large trees in search of a giant grub which was its favorite food.

Indians of the eastern seaboard had a story of the piasa, an enormous bird with horns, terrifying red eyes, scales, a tiger's head, and a long griffon-like tail. In earliest times huge paintings of just such a creature adorned a high rock bluff facing the Mississippi River at the present site of Alton, Illinois. It was first reported by the explorer Marquette, who said the painting was excellently done and frightening to behold.

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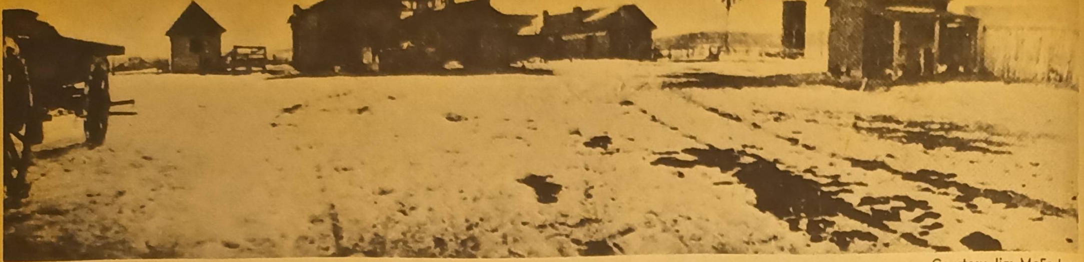


Courtesy Jim McEndree

JJ Ranch headquarters about five years after Prairie Cattle Company was dissolved.

THE OLD JJ RANCH

HOW IT BEGAN

By IKE OSTEEN

Photos Courtesy Author

IN 1869 when the cattle industry was getting a good start in the Arkansas Valley of Colorado, James C. Jones and his brother Peyton brought their herds from Texas and settled in the rich valley of the Purgatoire River five miles south of the present site of Las Animas, Colorado.

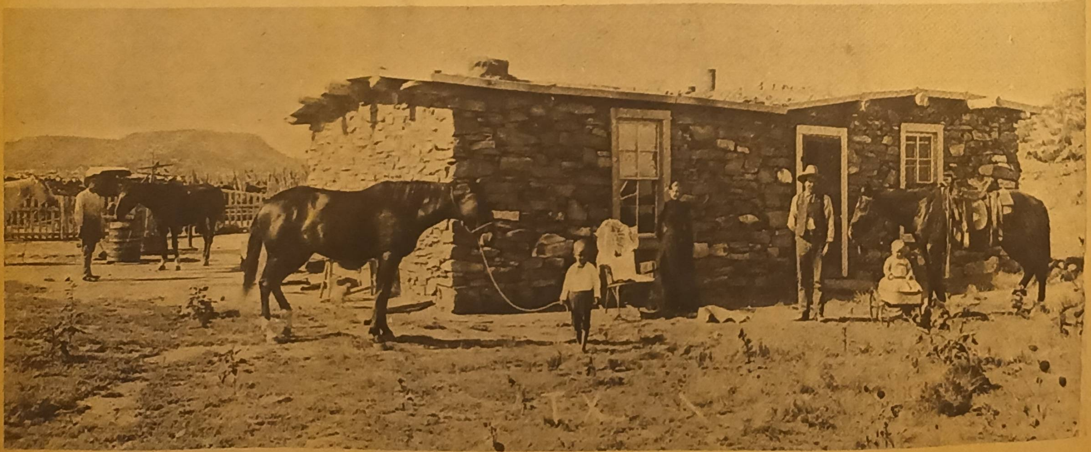
Peyton S. Jones seems to have patronized La Junta after that town was started in 1875. James did his trading at Las Animas. After working independently for a few years the two brothers pooled their interests and operated as the J. J. Cattle Company, using the brand JJ. The company prospered. In 1881 they owned 30,000 head of cattle besides several hundred horses and more than 16,000 acres of deeded land—mostly around water holes. Thus they could control many thousands of acres of range land without owning it.

Some of the increase in land and cattle is accounted for by the fact that they bought the holdings of other cattlemen as opportunity arose. In their peak years they ranged from Higbee east nearly to the Kansas state line and south to the Cimarron River. On August 23, 1878

(Continued on page 64)

The J. B. Dean family on the JJ Ranch in the 1880s.

Courtesy Colorado Historical Society



Jess Corbin's roundup boys on the JJ Ranch, 1913.

JJ Ranch Assistant Manager P. C. Garrett with J. K. "Beany" Wilson, range foreman.

HOW IT WAS RUN

By A. E. "ANDY" CROZIER

Photos Courtesy Author

IN THE FALL of 1913 I was in Kansas City, Missouri, a boy of eighteen years. I had learned the carpentry trade and also the trade of saddle and harness maker. My grandmother had taught me to cook. I had rebelled but she told me it would come in handy sometime and that I would be glad someday to know how to cook. Later I found out that everything a fellow learns is just that much better for him.

Through a friend of mine, I heard that the JJ Ranch at Higbee, Colorado had considerable carpentry work to be done as a twister had damaged some of their buildings. So I wrote them a letter and asked for a job. I told them I was of Scottish ancestry and it was well I did as their company, the Prairie Cattle Company, was owned by a bunch of Scots and Englishmen with the home office in Edinburgh. The company wrote back saying, come on out and we will put you to work.

They had bought out the old Jones Brothers' ranch in southeastern Colorado and had also had a similar ranch at Texline, Texas. They bought yearling steers in Old Mexico, the first cross between the longhorn and Hereford. The average price at that time was about fifteen dollars a head. Their herds represented about a million dollars on both ranches. The home ranch at Higbee ran three and sometimes four roundup outfits and it was about the same on the Texas ranch. Grazing land was rented from the counties of Las Animas, Bent, and Baca in Colorado.

There was quite a bit of government land still open to homestead. A person could take up 300 acres of possible irrigable land and also 320 of dry land. Dry land lay on mesa sides and tops. Cactus, grease-wood and palo verde grew on all the land. There were spots where buffalo clover and prairie grass grew which made excellent grazing.

Settlers had come in and a few were struggling to prove up on their homesteads. Some had tried to put up fences but most of the land was open range. I found the home ranch at Higbee had a nice residence called the White House for the manager and assistant manager and an adobe commissary built in an

From left, the author with John Quinn and Fred Ganz on the JJ Ranch about 1914.

Jess Corbin's outfit, JJ Ranch, July 15, 1914. From left, W. H. Wilson, Dr. Watleigh, Jack Hardy (seated), Jim Breslin, Earnay Baum, Jess Corbin, Chincho Salas, John Nelson (seated), Tom Lloyd, Wesley Evers, and Avaran Jones.

L-shape. There was also a combination blacksmith shop and harness and saddlery-repair machine shed for the farm tools, a bunk house and large dining hall and kitchen, a large barn and three corrals (one for horses and mules, one for the dairy cows) and a holding corral of about five acres. A circle corral was provided for the cowboys to break wild horses. The circle corral had a board fence about ten feet high to keep the horses from jumping out. I have seen wild horses jump out of a holding corral with a fence six feet high.

An office building was set off to one side close to the old Jones house, the walls of which were adobe about eighteen inches thick. There was also a garden in connection with the White House. The grounds of the main "set up" occupied about twenty or thirty acres and lay in the valley of the Purgatoire River, a treacherous quicksand-laden meandering stream fed by the streams of the Rocky Mountains. Sometimes a cloudburst would send a wall of water down the river to roll boulders and carry brush and move quicksand from one location to another scoured-out spot.

The ford across the river was never the same. A new ford was established by having one of the men take a wild horse and ride him across the river. A wild horse will not step into quicksand but has an instinct to go on solid ground. Quicksand was treacherous due to the fact that the sun quickly dried a crust on the surface and blow sand would cover it. A wild horse could tell, I suppose, by the vibration of the ground when he got too close to a quicksand area.

Higbee is about twenty miles south of La Junta, Colorado and the ford across the river was about three miles east of Higbee. Homesteaders would pass the ranch house on their way south to their places and would try to make it to the ranch at mealtime. The rules of hospitality were that if anyone came by at mealtime and did not come in to eat it was an insult to the people who lived there. So the company went along with the rules of the times and the cook would try to estimate how many "wrinklebellies" would come by. They called them wrinklebellies on account of the enormous amount of food they would eat at a sitting. They were usually pretty hard put to make ends meet so it was kind of a life-saver to them to be able to stop by and fill up once in a while.

IN THE SPRING of 1914 a pitiful thing happened. The Purgatoire River was on a rampage from cloudbursts in the mountains. Some of the boys from Mr. Higgins' outfit had gotten across before the flood and could not get back across until the water went down, which took sometimes as long as a week. On this particular morning they had ridden down to the water's edge and looked across and saw a wagon of one of the settlers on the other side. They called across and could barely make out above the roar of the water that one of the settler's children was sick and needed a doctor right away. Would one of the boys try to ride across to take the child in to La Junta? Several of the boys tried to ride their horses across but were swept downstream by the water, and the stout cow ponies had to swim for their lives to get back to the bank. The boys always slid off and held onto the horse's tail in such instances and were safer by doing so for if they stayed on, both horse and rider would have drowned. A watch was set up by the boys day and night so that at the earliest possible moment they could get across.

The author fetching the mail at Higbee, Colorado post office, 1914. In the car is Mr. Russell, the mail carrier.

POST OFFICE

At the end of the third day we heard the settlers crying. They called across and told us that it was too late, the little girl had died. We saw them hook up and go back toward the south to make another grave amid the cactus on the lonesome prairie where the howl of the coyote and the hoot of prairie dog owls fill part of the silence of the night.

The ranchers' association of southeastern Colorado had begun to realize that the breaking up of the prairie sod would cause it to blow and would eventually result in ruining the range both for settlers and cattle. They had talked it over and the decision was made to visit all of the settlers and tell them the true story and see if the ranchers could save them as well as themselves. So a committee was formed and visits were made but the settlers took the attitude that the cattlemen were trying to run them off their land. They would stick it out and if cycles of drouth did come they would take it. What they didn't know was that the land would blow away and ruin both parties in time.

One man had sold his section of land in Kansas and come to Colorado and bought two sections and had $100,000 in the bank. The wet cycle was on and the first two crops of dry land wheat made good. But then followed the dry years. In 1936 I found this same man running a self-service laundry in Colorado Springs. He recognized me and said he had finally walked off his land owning only the shirt on his back, that the cattlemen were right and if he had listened to them and sold out and gone back to Kansas he would not be in the economic stress he was in. All too late.

Vaccinating cattle (top) to prevent anthrax: from left, John Carson, Dr. Watleigh, and Fred Ganz. Bird's-eye view above of squeezing chute and pen, JJ Ranch, from atop dipping vat fence. Both photos taken July 12, 1914.

AFTER arriving on the ranch I was assigned the job of replacing the commissary roof which had been blown off by a twister. All I had for help were Mexicans who could talk no English and I could talk no Spanish. I soon learned enough to get along and found them willing workers and we got the job done. Winter gripped the land and sub-zero weather set in. One did not suffer much from the dry cold but had to be careful.

The foreman on the place was Frank Landon, a very efficient man and a good manager. It was his job to look after the home place, feed the hands or see that they were fed, keep up the farm machinery, look after the hay crop, break out new land and have it planted to alfalfa. It was his job also to see that the White House rustler took proper care of the dairy cows and the home garden. The foreman kept the commissary stocked up with canned goods, coffee, bacon, beans and so forth. It was his job also to see that all of the sets of harness and the saddles were kept in repair. Frank was an unusual man. He had a personality similar to Will Rogers and had a striking resemblance to him. He looked enough like him to have been a twin brother.

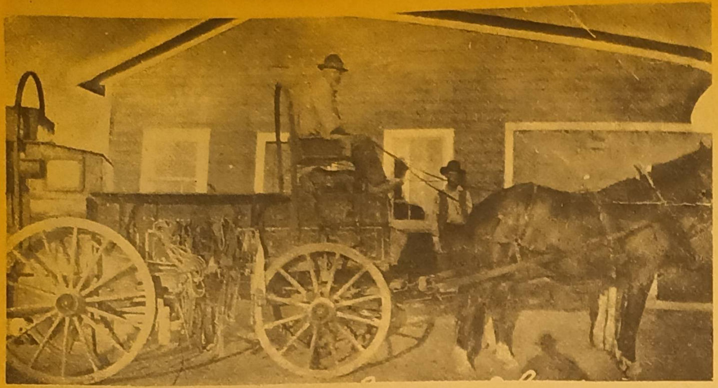
After the commissary was under roof and the weather below zero, Frank took me to the harness repair shop to mend harness and saddles. I had worked there several days while Frank, who was an excellent blacksmith, worked at the forge turning out horseshoes and sharpening plowshares. This particular morning one of the men came in and said Frank was needed at home. He had a pile of dull plowshares to sharpen and had just started up the forge when he was called. Before he left he asked me if I knew anything about blacksmithing and I told him I didn't.

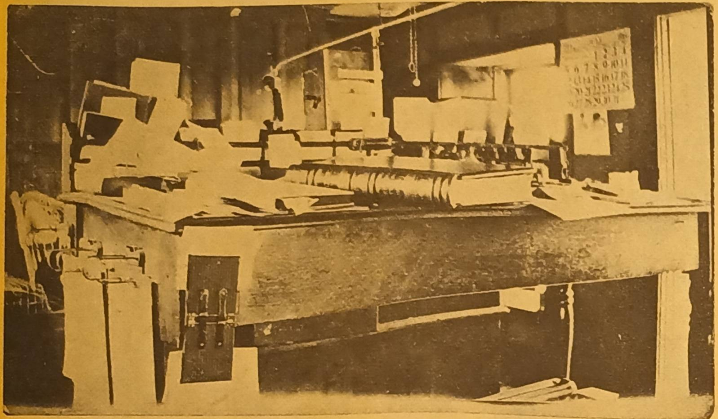
He said, "See that pile of plowshares? Well I want them all sharpened when I get back, it's a shame to waste the fire I have in the forge."

I had observed him sharpening the shares and had noted the color of the hot steel when he pounded it out on the anvil and just the color when he squelched it. The thought occurred to me that it would be funny if I could sharpen the shares and have them all done when he returned. So getting up the courage to try, the first one turned out just as good as the ones he had sharpened. I tried it with a file, like he did, to see if the temper was just right and the ring on the anvil the same, and it was. I continued until all of the shares had been sharpened. There must have been sixty or more—I did not count them but it was quite a pile.

When Frank came in later I was up on my bench mending saddles. He walked over to the forge. He had the habit, as Will Rogers had, when studying anything, of pushing his hat back on his head while gently scratching. He looked at the pile of sharpened shares, then glanced toward me. Then he took each share and tested it with a file and hammer. After he had finished he came over to me and said, "Do you know what I think you are? Well I just think you are the biggest liar I ever saw. Now after this when I want anything done and you are around I will just tell you to do it and it had better be done." Under his guidance all at the ranch went well.

One day he had no one available to go to the Higbee store and pick up the wagonload of provisions he had ordered. He told the wrangler to hitch up the wagon, that he was going to send Andy to the store. One of the farm hands helped hook up the team of broncs, Midnight and Brownie. They hooked them up all right! I found out later they took the doubletree off and left the pin out and swung the doubletree underneath the tongue and tied it there with baling wire carefully figuring just how much wear it would stand before falling down on the horses' heels and causing a runaway.





JJ Ranch cook Sam Carter atop a chuckwagon in front of the cook shack which accommodated 125 men, often including several "wrinklebellies." Below, Prairie Cattle Company office, Higbee, Colorado, where the author kept books for awhile. Calendar is July, 1914.

Midnight and Brownie had not been in harness for about six months and they were ready to fly. The boys had them eared down until I got into the wagon. When they let go, away we went. It was a good thing I had spent some time on the farm and was accustomed to driving or I would never have made it to the store. The road wound through an alfalfa field and when we came to the irrigation ditch that had two six-by-twelves laid across it for a bridge my eyes bugged out. The team had started to run and instead of trying to keep them down I figured we would have a pretty chariot race so I poured on the line and made them stretch out in good style. I didn't know what the horses would do when we came to the irrigation ditch.

All went well and they thundered across. The crossing had but one sound, "rat'purt," and we were across a thirty-foot ditch. The store at Higbee was about three miles from the ranch and I made the horses run all the way. Being excited I didn't notice the doubletree. When we got to the store I headed the team into a corner so it would be hard for them to get away easily. They were covered with lather and sweat. Mrs. Wilson, the store owner, asked me why I had run the horses so hard and I told her they wanted to run and I wanted to get it out of their system before we returned with the supplies.

With the loaded wagon the team did very nicely and when I drove into the home corral and up to the commissary I noticed the hands looked quizzical and gave particular attention to the doubletree. Frank said there were some things that needed to be taken up to his house about a mile farther east from the ranch. His house was in plain sight of the home place just on the upper edge of the valley at the foot of a mesa. All went well again until I had delivered the things and had gotten out to close the gate. I had barely gotten back into the wagon when the team, rested up by now, started to run. And just as they started to run that doubletree fell down on their heels. Luckily the outside trace came loose and as they stretched out, the yoke came off the tongue. The tongue dropped down and dug a furrow in the roadway.

I had sat down in the wagonbox and had a firm grip on the lines. With the added stopping power of the wagon tongue I was lucky to get the team stopped. They spread-eagled out and started to buck. By talking to them for awhile they quit and snorted, quivering with fright and facing one another. The pull of the lines had their heads pulled down to their shoulders. I jumped out and wound the lines around the wagon wheel. Then I circled and got away out in front of the team. Walking in I grasped the bridle cheeks and backed them to the wagon. I then lifted the wagon tongue and engaged it in the yoke ring. Then getting the lines gathered up I walked back and again took up the slack in the lines and re-snubbed it to the wagon-wheel.

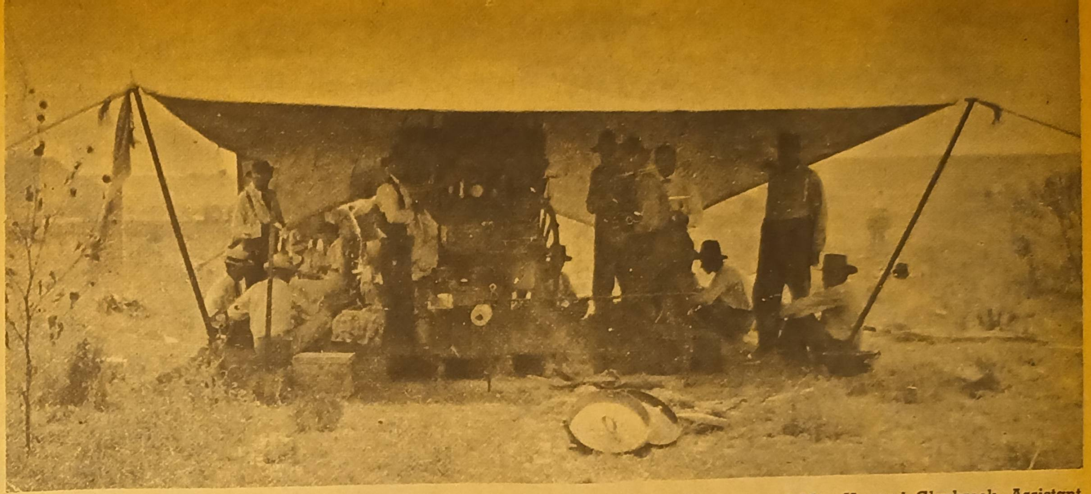
It was then that I found the doubletree had been wired on. Fortunately there was enough wire to fasten it securely enough to get me back to home base. When we drove into the corral it was funny to see the looks on the faces of the hands who had planned the trick on the tenderfoot. I never let on that anything had happened. All I said was, pointing to the doubletree, "Isn't it customary to have a pin to hold the doubletree instead of wire?" The hands were so astonished at finding the doubletree on the top side of the tongue that they did not say a word. Frank never cracked a smile.

ONE DAY the cook quit and there were about sixty men to feed, so Frank came and got me and said, "Go into the kitchen and cook until I have a chance to get another cook. Now don't say you can't cook, go on. I'll send Cruz Ramirez, one of the roundup cooks, to help you and it won't be for over a week at the most."

So into the kitchen I went. Cruz was a nice old fellow, couldn't speak a word of English. That gave me an opportunity to pick up a few more Spanish words. We made out well together. In a week Frank had another cook. At about that time the bookkeeper quit so Frank said again, "You know what I told you, go over and keep those books." It turned out to be a pretty good job as it wasn't hard, anywhere from 90 to 200 checks to prepare for the boss to sign. Post all labor, materials, supplies and cattle bought and sold. It was also my job to look after the herd book.

Life took on a different and more enjoyable atmosphere because the books took only about two weeks to do and the mail had to be gotten from Higbee each day. That was a good six-mile ride each day. The rest of the time I could ride out and visit the nearest roundup outfit and get better acquainted with the boys. Two of Kit Carson's great-grandsons worked in the roundup, Kit and John. We became good friends and had fun and excitement after the way of the cowhands.

One season an epidemic of anthrax broke out and the manager ordered all animals rounded up, vaccinated and dipped. There was a large holding corral that would hold 300 or more cattle, about 20 acres in size. At one end there was a squeezing chute to help handle the cattle quickly. One side of this narrow chute was hinged and rigged with a block and tackle to be pulled together thus holding the animal in a vise while vaccinating, branding and dehorning. This particular herd of more than 300 had never been dehorned and some had been skipped



Chuck time for Jess Corbin's outfit. Guests around the wagon that day included Manager and Mrs. Howard Glazbrook, Assistant Manager and Mrs. P. C. Garrett, W. H. Wilson, Lon Sears, and Dr. Watleigh. Cowboys present are George Barrington, Banes Hardy, Paul Bradley, John Nelson, John Carson, Tom Lloyd, Pat Martinez, and cook Sam Carter.

with the branding iron.

Frank had sent for Dr. Watleigh from La Junta to come out and vaccinate. Before I forget it I must tell you the rest of the layout of the corrals. Beyond the squeezing chute about twenty feet was the dipping vat. To one side of this opening was a smaller corral of about five acres where the veterinarian worked and brands were kept hot. This corral had been built by the Mexicans out of poles stuck into the ground side by side and laced together with other poles at the top, height about ten feet. When the company took over, this corral was too small and it was enlarged by planting posts with two-by-eights nailed on horizontally. There was about a hundred feet of vertical pole fencing before the new fence started on the dipping vat side.

Keystone dehorners were used and the horn cavity swabbed with axle grease and carbolic acid mixed to sterilize and to keep the flies away. The crew was short a hand in the filling of syringes for the veterinarian. So Frank came and said, "Get yourself down to the dipping vat and fill syringes for Dr. Watleigh." Frank had given me a pony to ride, a Circle S quarter horse from Sinaloa, Mexico. An affectionate little fellow, he weighed about a thousand pounds, bay with white blaze in forehead and white stocking feet. He had been raised wild but was now gentle with only one trick: He would squat and jump sidewise and try to unseat his rider. He always had a giveaway quiver in his body just before he played the trick and I learned to be ready and stay on.

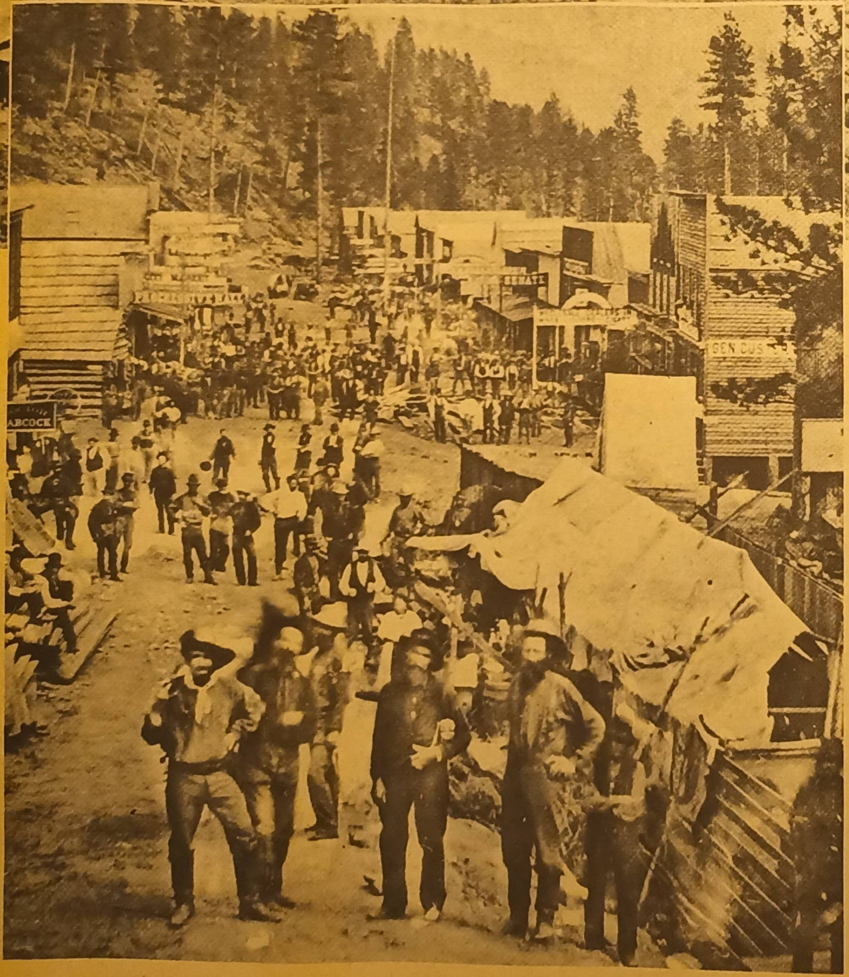
Well, little Pancho and I went galloping down to help. Mr. Higgins' outfit was doing the work on this bunch. A roundup outfit consisted of a wagon boss, a cook, a horse wrangler and from nine to twelve boys. Each boy had a mount of about nine horses. The horses being grass-fed could not stand up to continuous riding while working a herd, so mounts had to be changed every hour. Ride 'em as they came in rotation, couldn't skip a bucker, but ride cowboy ride or pack your saddle. It was always a wonderful and colorful sight to see from 120 to 150 horses in a rope corral.

To you who have never seen a rope

(Continued on page 63)

Watermelon feast on the JJ Ranch, July 25, 1914. From left, John Quinn, Jerome Hill, Fred Ganz, and Ed Bell.

LIQUOR DEALERS
PRATT



Courtesy Morrow Collection
University of South Dakota Museum

The day comes when you just quit caring how they fall. Your heart doesn't skip at an ace, your shoulder doesn't shrug at a deuce. So it was with

Deadwood's LADY OF CARDS

By MILDRED FIELDER
Photos Courtesy Author

ALICE was fluting the edges of an apple pie when she heard steps on the porch. She glanced out the kitchen window as she washed the flour from her hands. Fresh mountain air blew through the open pane. The day was clear, like a bell made of newly dropped dew, and the sun shone warmly on the cabin. It was a day for great things, a day for beautiful things! Tonight she and Frank would dine on apple pie—a fitting but not ample tribute to the exhilaration of her mood.

The visitor on the porch lifted a hand and knocked. There seemed to be a hesitance in the knock, a deference. No one knocks like that, Alice thought. She hurried around the partition separating the kitchen from the front room and opened the door.

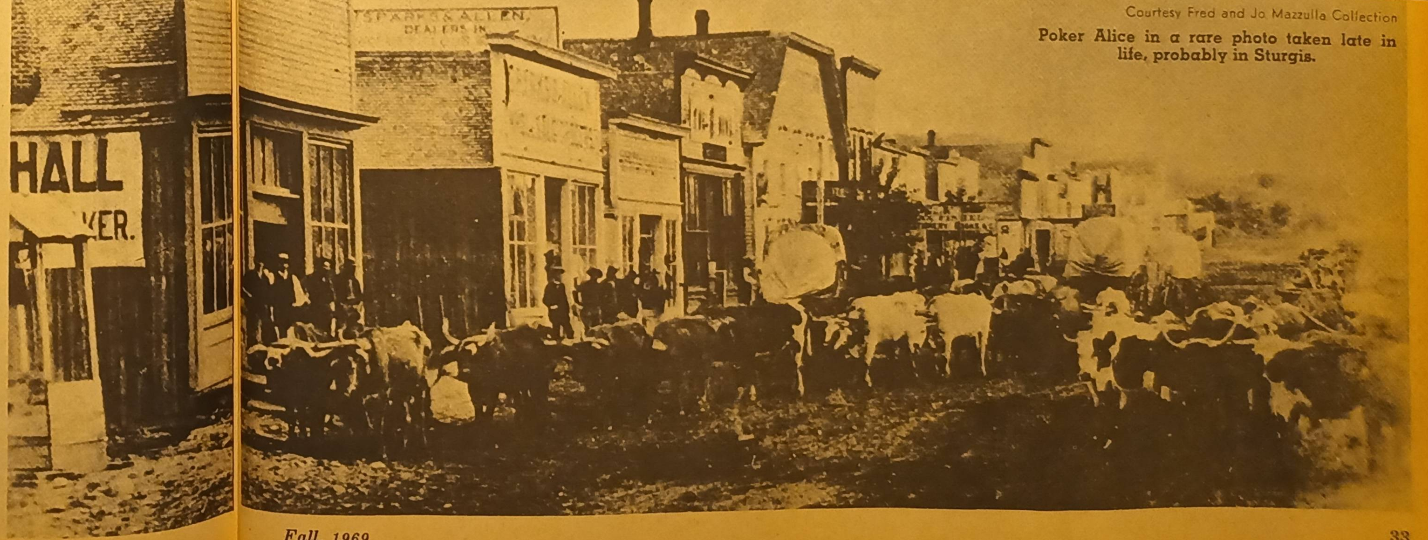
"Oh, Jack."

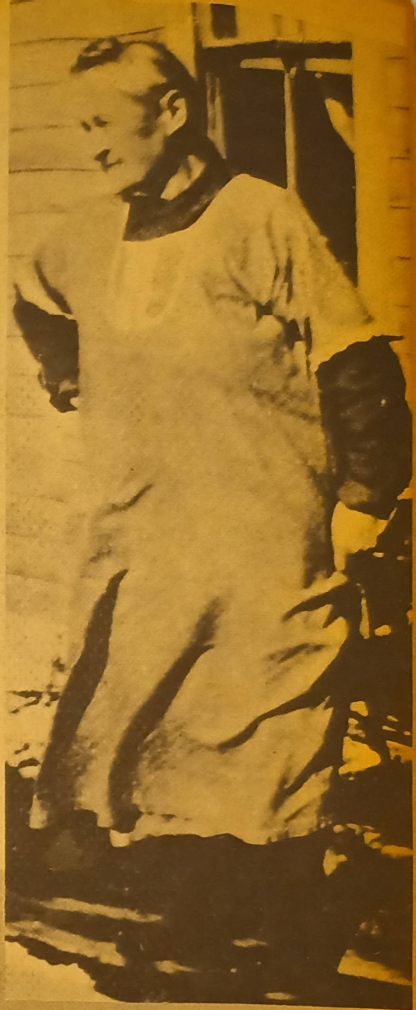
One of the miners. She smiled in welcome, a trifle bewildered. Jack should be at the mine with Frank. Dressed in his work clothes, he stood on her porch awkward and ill at ease. He fingered the brim of his hat in his hand, fumbling for his voice.

(Continued on page 65)

Sturgis Photo Courtesy Mrs. Marion Lutey

Sherman Street (left) in Deadwood, South Dakota in 1877 (top) and 1876. Below, main street in Sturgis, South Dakota in 1886.





Courtesy Fred and Jo Mazzulla Collection

Poker Alice in a rare photo taken late in life, probably in Sturgis.

CAPTURE OF THE HORSE THIEVES

By W. E. HARRIS

Photo Courtesy Author

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

MY PARENTS settled on a quarter section in Kingfisher County, Oklahoma in 1889, and I was born in the family dug-out in 1891. I was too young to remember the run when the Cherokee Strip was opened in '93, but not the opening of what we called the Comanche Country in 1901.

My oldest brother, Arthur, had just turned twenty-one and was eligible to register in the lottery. So the day before registration was to begin he got all dressed up and my father took him to Hennessey where he caught the train for El Reno. When Pop got home that evening he told us about how the train was already so loaded with homeseekers there was not even standing room on the car steps for the men gathered in Hennessey. Arthur was running around trying to board the train when a kind man inside shoved a window open and told him to crawl through. The man reached out and caught him by the arms and pulled him inside the car.

A few weeks after Arthur returned home he went to the country post office on his bicycle to pick up the mail. In a little while we saw him coming down the road peddling that bicycle for all he was worth. His name had been drawn in the lottery and he would get a claim. After considerable scouting of the country with Pop and an uncle in a covered wagon Arthur filed on a quarter section about seventeen miles southwest of El Reno. Pop gave him a team of horses and a wagon, so that winter he and my brother Walter moved down there. Their first job was to dig a cave, in which they lived that winter, and to fence about forty acres for a stock pasture.

In the spring Pop decided to build a house for Arthur, and he took me with him in the covered wagon. It was sixty miles from our place to Arthur's, taking us two days to make the trip. This was the first time I had been that far from home.

Lumber was hauled from Minco and Pop built the house, which was really just a ten by twelve cabin, but better than the cave. During the time Pop was working on the house and my brothers were busy with the teams breaking sod, I just wandered around with my .22 rifle. A gully, bordered by oak, elm, and dogwood, ran through my brother's quarter section, north to south. Gray squirrels and cottontail rabbits were plentiful in the timber so I kept the table supplied with meat.

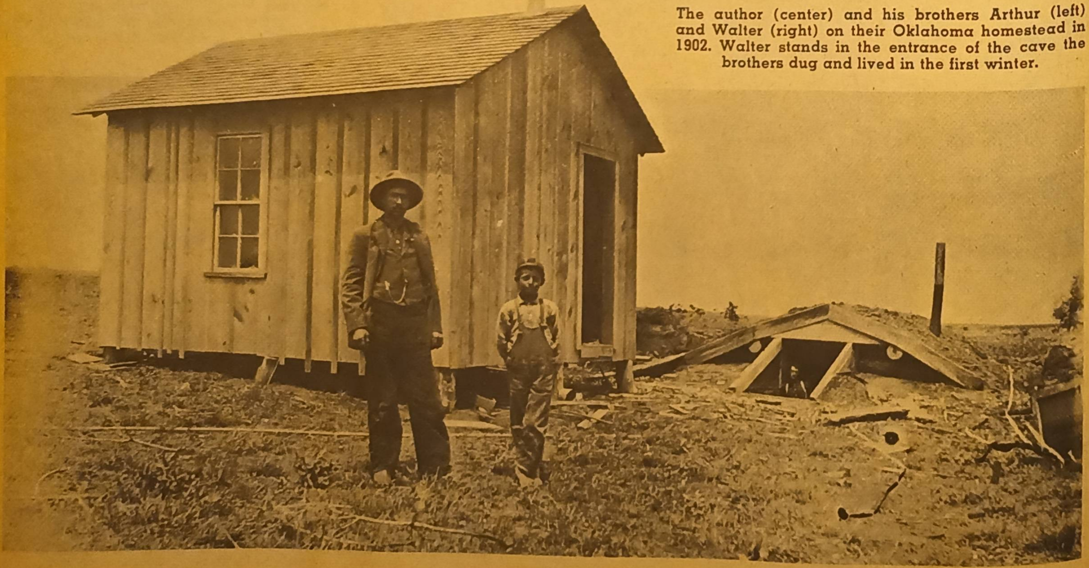
ON MY FIRST excursion with my .22 I came up out of the gulch and stumbled onto an old house and a corral containing quite a bunch of horses. Several men were idling around the yard under the oaks. One of them called to me and I joined them. They seemed just like ordinary country folks and were friendly, most of them young, perhaps in their late twenties. Peering through the windows I could see that the downstairs was just one big room containing a cook stove, a long table and eight or ten chairs. Evidently the beds were all upstairs. After a while an older man who seemed to be doing the cooking came out and learned that I was staying on the place south of them. He asked me if we had any sugar to spare. I told him I thought we did. He offered me a half dollar if I would get him a little jar of it. A half dollar was quite a chunk of money so I hot-footed it for Arthur's place where I filled the jar and took it back to my newly discovered neighbors.

That evening I told Pop and my brothers about visiting the six men who were living in the old house and how I had made a half dollar by taking them a little jar of sugar. "You better stay away from those men down there," Arthur said. "They are horse thieves." He then went on to tell us of the neighborhood gossip. These men went south toward the Texas border, stole horses and took them north toward the Kansas line and sold them. Then they stole more horses up north and brought them south. The old house was just their stopping-off place between the two ends of their operations and was used as a headquarters. Arthur also told us the history of the old house. Men who were running cattle illegally before the opening had built it. Then with the opening of the country to settlement the cattlemen had been forced to leave.

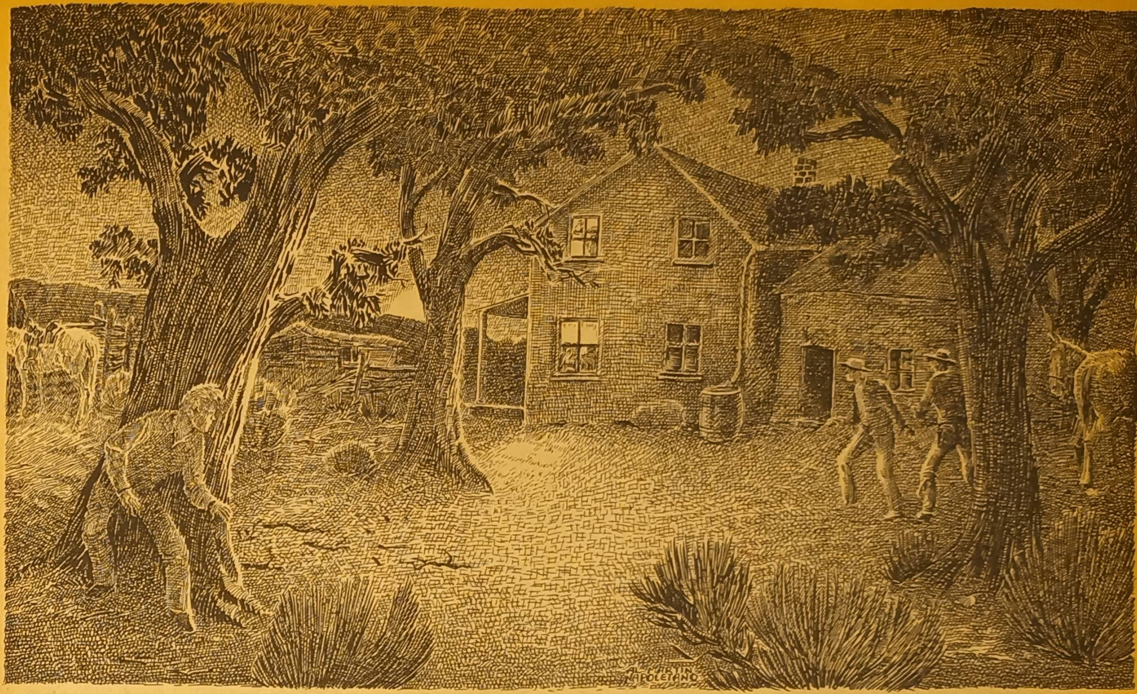
One of the men in the party of horse thieves had drawn a number in the lottery and had filed on the quarter-section on which the old house was located. He and the others were not making any attempt at farming but just used a small fenced pasture for stock and lived in the house. Stealing horses for a living was easier than farming. Arthur said that the place was known locally as the old George Washington place. Under an oak tree a few hundred feet from the house was a grave surrounded by log cribbing. This was reportedly the burial place of the Indian chief who had adopted the name of George Washington.

Disregarding Arthur's warning to stay strictly away, I was down there again several times during the next week. Having visited with these men when I was unaware of their being outlaws, I was not afraid of them. I was curious about the grave of George Washington, which I found under the oak tree just as Arthur had described.

On my second trip to the old house some of the men were missing. Also most of the horses that had been in the little pasture during my first visit were gone. Having been raised with horses I had taken particular note of them when I'd been there the time before. On subsequent trips I noticed horses in the pasture which had not been there previously. Sometimes all six men were loafing around the yard. At other times I would find only two or three at home. Young as I was I took mental note of these things and decided that the neighborhood gossip was right. The men were moving horses in and out.



The author (center) and his brothers Arthur (left) and Walter (right) on their Oklahoma homestead in 1902. Walter stands in the entrance of the cave the brothers dug and lived in the first winter.



"I was crouched behind a big tree. . . . Jim and his father had dismounted and tied their horses. . . . The detective upstairs moved the lamp slowly back and forth. This was the signal. . . ."

If there's one thing that makes a kid feel like he's just gonna bust, that makes his head pound like a river that's runnin' too full, it's having a secret that the grown folks don't know!

THE SECOND Sunday we were at Arthur's place Pop told me there was to be Sunday school and church at the schoolhouse a mile away. I had better put on my good clothes and attend. At Sunday school I met Jim Smith who lived on a farm a couple miles west of my brother's place. Jim's father, Ab Smith, had been elected sheriff in the first county election. Jim was a few years older than I but seemed very friendly. Knowing I was a stranger down there he invited me to stop by and see him if I ever got over in his neighborhood.

So it was that a few days later, while exploring new spots with my .22, I wound up at Jim Smith's place. We spent an hour or so playing mumblety-peg. Then to liven up our conversation I mentioned to Jim that there were six horse thieves living on the old George Washington place. Jim looked at me questioningly, then asked, "What do you know about them? How do you know they are horse thieves?"

I told him I had been down to see them several times, and what Arthur had told me about them. Rather hesitatingly Jim said, "Your brother is wrong. There are only five horse thieves down there. The man who rides the white horse is a detective Dad brought in here from Kansas City. He got acquainted with the outlaws and joined up with them. He has the evidence now to put them in the pen. In a few nights when they are all at home and the moon is full we are going to take them in."

Jim took me inside the wood shed and showed me five pairs of handcuffs hanging on a hook. Then he seemed to realize he had talked too much. He became very serious and said, "Billy, if Dad knew what I've told you he would beat the daylight out of me. Don't you ever breathe a word of it to anyone, not even to your own folks."

For a few days I was in a state of suspended animation and wandered about saying little to anyone. Pop and my brothers wondered what was wrong with me. I seemed to be daydreaming all the time. It was very difficult for such a young boy to hold so vital a secret. I wanted to tell them what I had heard, but out of respect for Jim and his hide I managed to hold my tongue.

Then a few nights later things began to happen. We had finished our supper and I had gone out to the covered wagon where Pop and I slept. Pop and my brothers were playing pitch down in the cave. It was just dusk and a full moon was peering over the oaks on the east. Out on the road I saw a man on a white horse heading toward the George Washington place, the man Jim said was a detective. A half mile or so behind him were two more horsemen. This would be Jim and his father, the sheriff. My heart jumped into my mouth. This was it. They were going to take the horse thieves.

I did not hesitate, but broke for the gulch on the run. This gulch was dry except during rainstorms and formed a good path down to the George Washington place. I had followed it many times with my .22. The bright moon sent streaks down through the oaks to light my way.

In a few minutes I was crouched behind a big tree a hundred feet or so from the old house. The white horse was tied to a post out near the corral. Jim and his father had dismounted and tied their horses a short distance south of the house. Through the window I could see men sitting around the table eating their supper. A kerosene lamp in the center of the table cast a faint glow over the surroundings.

WHAT WENT ON inside the house I could not see, but later I learned all the details from Jim. The detective had gone inside where the men were eating supper. He moseyed around a few minutes then went upstairs where he lit another kerosene lamp. He had made certain there were no guns downstairs. They were all up in the bedroom. He then moved the lamp slowly back and forth in front of the south window. This was the signal to the sheriff.

From my hiding place under the oak tree I saw Jim's father walk up to the door where he knocked loudly and shouted, "Come outa there with your hands up!"

Immediately there was a commotion inside and the sound of falling chairs as the men made a rush for the stairway and their guns. As those in front neared the top of the boxed-in stairway the detective stepped out with two six-shooters leveled at them. Those on the bottom turned to retreat and there stood the sheriff with two more six-shooters pointing their way. A shrill whistle from inside brought Jim on the run with five pairs of handcuffs.

While this was transpiring I was crouched behind the oak tree scared to death. I shook as though I had the ague. I wanted to break and run for home. But I had gone this far and in spite of my shaking managed to stay put. In a few minutes the men began filing out of the house with their hands close together in front. I could see that they were all handcuffed. While the sheriff kept the group covered with his guns Jim and the detective began saddling horses. In a short while the men were mounted in a string, halter ropes tied to the saddle of the one in front. Then the detective mounted his white horse, picked up the halter rope of the lead horse and led the way with Jim and the sheriff bringing up the rear. The eight horsemen in single file silhouetted in the moonlight made a creepy sight from where I was hiding. The sheriff and the detective had timed their action perfectly. The full moon would light their way on the long ride to Anadarko and jail.

"Ground's gettin' harder ever year!"

As I watched the horsemen disappear over the ridge it suddenly dawned on me that I had been gone for some time. If Pop and my brothers had discovered I was not in the covered wagon they would be scouring the woods for me. And Pop would give me a switching for running away at night. I headed for the gulch on the run. In my haste I caught a foot in a tree root and went head-first into some rocks, knocking a good patch of skin off my nose. But when I got home Pop and my brothers were still playing pitch down in the cave, so I crawled into bed in the wagon and managed to go to sleep. Next morning when I went in for breakfast Pop and my brothers wanted to know how I got the skinned nose. I was ready for this question. I told them I had fallen down in the dark on my way to the privy.

At noon the next day Arthur came home from one of the neighbor's with a big piece of news. Sheriff Smith and a detective had taken in the horse thieves last night. They had handcuffed them and taken them all the way to jail in Anadarko. I was silent while Arthur told us what had happened. Then I could hold my secret no longer. Very importantly I puffed out my chest and said, "I know all about it. I was there!"

My brothers and Pop stared at me with open mouths. "What do you mean —you were there?" Then I told them all about it, how I knew in advance that it was going to happen, how I went down to watch, and how I got the skinned nose. Pop didn't take a stick to me. He just sat there and grinned.

Back up home word got around that Billy had witnessed the capture of the horse thieves. I was quite a hero. Whenever a few boys got together I would have to tell them about it. As I told and retold the story I have to admit that sometimes I added on a little. I even got so brave that instead of standing out there behind the oak tree shaking like a quaking aspen in a breeze I went inside and helped Jim snap the handcuffs on the outlaws! Maybe the good Lord will excuse me for fibbing just a little. It made a better story to tell the boys.

There was an aftermath, though, to my visit to Arthur's. I became enamoured with the name Jim and told my folks if I ever had a boy of my own I was going to name him after Jim Smith. The folks laughed at the idea of a twelve-year-old boy picking a name for his own son. At any rate the years passed and I became a ranger with the U.S. Forest Service and my first boy was born in a mountain hamlet in northern California. He was promptly named Jim. He is fifty-one years old now and I have often kidded him about having been named fourteen years before he was born.

Mysterious Monsters

(Continued from page 25)

Just as the world-wide legend of a Deluge appears to have basis in fact, so might the Thunder Bird legend be a racial memory of an actual creature that lived in ancient times. Was the strange flying monster of Tombstone the last one? Was it a lone—and lonely—relic of another age which somehow had managed to live on in the unknown country of northwestern Mexico or in an unexplored cranny in the Rockies? We can only speculate.

WHEREVER it came from, the minds of those two cowboys reeled at the sight of it. They had been jogging along, slumped easily in the saddles as their horses clop-clopped steadily across the bleak Arizona desert. It was the spring of 1890. Already tall yuccas had sent skyward their bloomstalks festooned with delicate pear-sized white blossoms. Green leaves were peeping from buds on the dead-looking branches of scraggly mesquite bushes.

One of the men had raised his head and swept the horizon with keen hawk eyes. Although the Indian troubles were over—Geronimo and his murderous band had been subdued just a handful of years before—long and close association with danger had made it habitual to keep a wary eye peeled.

As his head swung around he had caught a movement in the corner of his eye and had wheeled in the saddle for a better look. And that was when he had seen the monster.

As if its staggering size weren't enough, its configuration was something out of a nightmare. Those incredible wings were attached to a long, snake-like body. Two legs, with feet sporting formidable bony claws, grew from in front of the wings. The head resembled that of an alligator, but with protruding eyes the size of plates.

As they watched, frozen with fear and amazement, the creature stirred. Evidently rested, it began preparing to take flight. Again the sand swirled as those giant wings fanned the air, slowly at first, then more rapidly. It started to run, awkwardly dragging its clumsy elongated body. As it gained speed, it lifted its tail to reduce the drag. Suddenly it was airborne!

The horses tried to bolt. The spell was broken. With whoops and yells, the cowboys spurred their mounts in pursuit. At first they thought their chase was hopeless. But the monster stayed low, gaining just enough altitude so that the downstrokes of its wings would clear the brush. It flew perhaps half a mile, then came down again.

The men galloped to within several hundred yards of the exhausted creature. Then the horses refused to go any closer. No amount of spurring, whipping or yelling could induce the fear-stricken animals to advance. So the cowboys dismounted, slid their rifles out of the scabbards, pumped shells into the chambers, and cautiously approached on foot.

The creature laboriously maneuvered around to observe them. The men stopped, mixed emotions raging within them. Fear told them to run. And at the same time, they were urged forward by the instinct of the hunter—the desire to bag the damndest trophy of them all!

Before they could get within accurate range, the creature took off again. The men ran back to their horses, hastily mounted, and again took up their pursuit. As before, it flew only a short distance before coming down.

This time, as the men approached, the creature made no move to escape. They saw why. It had come down with one wing folded under and trapped beneath its body. It was powerless to fly. But the other wing was free, and one swipe of it could crush a man. Or a flick of the giant tail could send one spinning across the sand, a lifeless rag doll. Those enormous jaws lined with sharp teeth could bite a cowboy in half.

Staying clear, the men began firing at the beast. When it was dead, they approached to examine their quarry. They could hardly believe the evidence of their own eyes. Straightening the bent-under wing, they paced off the wingspan, which totaled about 160 feet. That, friends, is considerably longer than that of the huge B-47 Air Force bomber of just a few years ago. The eel-like body measured ninety-two feet in length and fifty inches in diameter. The head was eight feet long. The wings were of a thick translucent membrane like those of a bat and had no feathers, scales or hair. The skin of the body was smooth.

The men sliced off the tip of one wing and took it with them. They arrived in Tombstone late in the evening of April 25, 1890 to make preparations to skin the creature and ship the hide for examination by scientists.

And that's the only mention of this extraordinary event this author has been able to find.

Did the ranchers really return and skin the thing? If so, where is the hide today? Or did the carcass of this amazing creature finally turn to dust under the burning desert sun? Or was the whole incident a hoax?

(I'd like very much to obtain more information on this almost unbelievable event and will welcome letters from readers knowing anything about it.)

THE WEIRD flying monster of Tombstone is not the only outlandish creature said to exist, or to have existed in the past, in America. In the Pacific Northwest there are numerous stories of a huge hairy ape-man called the Sasquatch. Aquatic monsters have been reported in lakes in the western United States and Canada. And the stories of the enormous "thing" that lived in southern California during the last century are nearly beyond belief.

The Sasquatch from earliest times has been reported in the vast crescent-shaped forest stretching from northern California up and around into western Canada.

This part of the country is mountainous, densely forested and, believe it or not, largely unexplored. Sure, you look at a map and see roads, names of peaks, and what-not, and it looks civilized. But the country is so difficult to penetrate that the maps probably were made by a process known to engineers as "papering." They survey around the edges, take sights on high peaks and other landmarks inside the area, mark them on the map, and never go in at all.

A fairly accurate description of the Sasquatch can be assembled from the reports of persons who claimed to have seen the creature. (One authority maintains that there have been many more sightings of the Sasquatch than of the Abominable Snowman!)

This creature is said to be between six and eight feet tall, weighing between 400 and 1,200 pounds, man-like in stature except for unusually long forearms, with receding forehead, protruding lips, prominent brows, and covered with a thick growth of inch-long hair.

The first white explorers heard of the Sasquatch from the Indians. But the Indians soon learned to keep their mouths shut about the creature because the white man merely said the Indians were crazy. The situation hasn't changed much. Many people still refuse to place any credence in Sasquatch stories.

But no one in the world could have convinced members of a train crew of the California Pacific Railroad that there was no such thing. Because, in 1884, they captured one!

It was a young male, not quite five feet high and weighing about 130 pounds, caught after a chase by the engineer and four other crewmen. He was christened "Jacko" and kept in a cage in a baggage car and exhibited in towns along the railroad.

Stories of Sasquatch sightings persist right down to the present day. The creatures occasionally are reportedly seen around remote logging camps, as are their enormous tracks. A few years ago a band of Sasquatches, evidently resenting an intrusion into its territory, attacked a camp at night and demonstrated their disapproval by vandalism, which included picking up a number of *full* fifty-five-gallon gasoline drums and hurling them over a cliff! However, there are no known instances of their attacking human beings, of whom they apparently are afraid.

Startling in its implication is the August, 1965, Sasquatch incident near Monroe, Michigan, a small town on the shore of Lake Erie between Detroit and Toledo. Miss Christine Van Acker, then seventeen, and her mother, Mrs. George Owens, were driving through the area. Apparently they had stopped, for they reported that a seven-foot, 400-pound, ape-like man covered with black hair reached through the car window and put its hand on Christine's head, giving her a black eye in the process. Probably it was just curious about Christine's blonde bouffant coiffure, and the shiner merely an accidental result of the creature's awkwardness.

The startling aspect of this incident is the fact that never, as far as I've been able to determine, has such a report come from so far east. If it really were a Sasquatch, how did it get there? Did it somehow manage to swim the Detroit River from Ontario to Michigan and travel unseen through the thickly-populated area around Windsor, Detroit and Dearborn? It is wildly unlikely that the creature could have wandered all the way from the Pacific Northwest. Are they native to the area but have never been seen because of their natural shyness? Or have they been sighted by persons who either refused to believe their senses or merely kept quiet for fear of ridicule?

The Sasquatch may not be limited to the North American West. Occasionally a report will filter up from the wild, forbidding Barranca del Cobre country of Mexico of a tribe of wild men, half ape, half man, living in the forested depths of the great canyon.

PROBABLY the most fearsome being ever recorded in supposedly rational America was the awesome monster said to have lived for generations in Lake Elizabeth, California, until along about 1890 when it flew away forever.

This creature reportedly was at home on land, under water, and in the air—a triple-threat monster if there ever were one. Apparently it was there when the first Mexican settlers entered California. According to Major Horace Bell in *On the Old West Coast,* no one would settle in the valley, in spite of the fertile soil and ample water, because of the monster.

In the 1830s a Don Pedro Carillo is reported to have taken up a grant of land in the area but three months later, after building a house, barn and corral, abandoned his new hacienda because of the supernatural being. Major Bell quotes him as saying, "Conditions there made me prematurely old."

Sometime after 1855 another settler took a chance. Chico Lopez moved in, bringing another Chico—last name Vasquez, said to be a brother of the notorious outlaw Tiburcio Vasquez—as foreman. Major Bell quoted from a manuscript supposedly written by a Don Guillermo Embustero y Mentiroso, who related an incident which happened while he was visiting the ranch.

Vasquez rode up to the ranch house greatly excited about something in the lake. Everyone immediately saddled up and dashed to the shore. When they arrived, they heard a thunderous whistling roar from a thick growth of cattails and could smell the foul breath of the beast.

Then they made out the silhouette of a tremendous monster, as large or larger than a great whale, with enormous bat-like wings which it flapped periodically as though trying to arise from the mud. It churned the water to a froth with what appeared to be huge flippers or legs.

The men fled in terror—as who wouldn't?—and returned the next day with a squad of armed cowboys. But the beast could not be found.

Sometime later the Lopez livestock began to disappear. One night there was a loud commotion in the corral, and the men reached the spot just in time to see the great winged creature flying away, outlined with terrifying clarity against the moonlit sky. A count of the livestock revealed ten horses missing!

Major Bell says this happened in 1883 and that Chico Lopez immediately sold out and left the country.

The spread was bought by a Don Felipe Rivera, who viewed the monster with a refreshing commercial zeal. He planned to capture the thing and sell it to a circus and is said to have signed a contract with the Sells-Floto show, which promised to shell out $25,000 for such an unusual attraction.

One day while searching, Rivera actually found the beast. It was resting on the shore. At the sight of the man it took fright and began waddling back to the safety of the water. The brave Don Felipe ran alongside firing at it with his .44 Frontier Colt revolver. He said later that the bullets hitting the creature rang as though striking armor plate, and the next day he returned and picked up his slugs, which had been flattened by the impact.

Rivera described it as about forty-five feet long and as large as "four elephants," with a bulldog head, six legs, and enormous wings which it kept folded along its back. Sometime later the monster was seen flying away and the folks around Lake Elizabeth were never bothered again.

JUST AS INCREDIBLE, but with much more evidence to attest their existence, are the huge marine monsters said to be living in at least two lakes in the western United States.

Scotland, with its famed tourist trap, the Loch Ness Monster, has nothing on Nevada. For decades sightings of a tremendous *something* swimming around in Lake Walker have been reported. Local Indians have age-old legends about it. In fact, so familiar has the monster become to residents of Hawthorne that the high school athletic teams there call themselves "The Serpents."

A tale, represented as an Indian legend and published in the Mineral County *Independent-News* of February 3, 1965, holds that early Indians were being eaten by the monster. Finally they decided to kill it, whereupon the creature surfaced, signalled for a powwow, and struck a bargain with the redskins. He would eat only white men from then on if the Indians would promise not to kill him.

Indian legends and old wives' tales make interesting reading, sure, but there's nothing like an eyewitness. And I have one. I have in my files a letter from a couple who formerly lived in Babbitt, near Hawthorne. They raced the monster in their car but quit when they saw it was winning. Then they stopped and watched the creature cavort in the water. The letter is reproduced below almost in full, except for their names:

"It was the latter part of April, 1956, just as the sun was dropping behind the mountain on the west side of the lake. My wife and I had driven to the extreme north end of the lake and had turned around and were driving back toward Babbitt. . . . The lake is narrow at this point. My wife looked back and saw something coming from the north that looked like a high powered motor boat, the way it was splitting the water. We were driving about 35 miles an hour and this shark-like monster had gained on us so that by the time we stopped, which was just a minute or two later, it was even with us. The road at that time was all of half a mile from the lake shore and quite high above the water. The sun was shining on the mountain east of the lake but not on the water, which made the lake almost transparent; we could see the bottom. This shark-like monster stopped in the most lighted spot, and then all of a sudden it started straight from us at a great speed for about 100 yards, and there it whipped to the left and submerged. We watched this happen three times, then it disappeared around the point into deeper water. We are sure we watched it for all of 10 or 15 minutes. It must have been 45 to 50 feet long and its back stuck up above the water at least four or five feet when it was swimming fast. We think in our own minds that it was feeding on the mud hens which were plentiful on the lake at that time. . . . We think we had the best look at this 'monster' that anyone has ever had. . . ."

There you are, folks—a straightforward account of the sighting of something that shouldn't be, but is.

It may be that in a few years scientists will actually be able to authenticate this monster. The lake's input has been diverted for irrigation, they say, and the lake is getting lower and lower. It may become entirely dry in time, and perhaps some naturalist with more curiosity than is normal will resurrect its bones from the dried mud of the lake bottom.

Lake monsters are reported in many bodies of water in western Canada and down into Montana and Idaho. Payette Lake in Idaho, some miles north of Boise, has a particularly active monster which has been sighted often by vacationers, campers and fisherman.

So—next time you are driving by a western lake, or through the northern California forests, be alert. You might see something *very* interesting.

But keep your mouth shut. It'll be just as bad as if you had sighted a flying saucer. No one will believe you.

Messenger to the Indians

(Continued from page 15)

a man named Wyatt. According to a letter Captain Bankhead wrote Comstock's brother-in-law, Judge Wakeley of Omaha, on January 29, 1868 the killing had taken place January 14. "After some conversation between the parties in the Trader's Store of this Post, the nature of which has not transpired, Comstock shot at Wyatt three times, all balls taking affect [*sic*], from which he died in a few minutes."

Shortly after the shooting Comstock was arrested by military authorities and was sent down to Hays under armed guard along with one of the witnesses to the affair. In Hays the civil authorities released Comstock for reasons not clear to Captain Bankhead. According to one story, which may be more legend than fact, Comstock was taken before Judge M. S. Joyce who asked the scout how he pleaded. Comstock, being the truthful type, pleaded guilty. "Ye are a damned fool for tellin' it," the judge is reported to have answered. "I discharge ye for want of evidence."

At any rate Bankhead understood that another warrant for Comstock's arrest had been issued by civil authorities in Hays but he had not yet been apprehended. In the meantime Comstock's letters were being held at Fort Wallace, at his request, by Capt. (Bvt. Lt. Col.) Miles W. Keogh of the Seventh Cavalry.

By early February 1868 it was apparent that Comstock was drifting west. He had ended his employment with the army at the end of December and was attempting to establish a ranch on Rose Creek about eight miles west of Fort Wallace. Peter Trudell (Trudeau), who later that year would participate in the Beecher Island fight, was his employe and had $1,100 of Comstock's money with which to purchase cattle and materials to stock the ranch. Perhaps the second warrant against the scout had by this time been dismissed for he owned the Rose Creek ranch until his death late that summer.

Comstock used the hay meadow at Rose Creek ranch to provide his income which was estimated at between $5,000 and $7,500 yearly. During the summer, however, he supplemented that money with occasional duties as scout for Sheridan. While in the field Comstock's partner was Abner T. Grover, chief scout for Major Forsyth's band in August and September. Grover and Comstock were assigned to visit some Cheyennes who were then camping about the headwaters of Pawnee and Walnut Creeks and north and west of Fort Wallace. They were to explain the provisions of the treaty of Medicine Lodge which had been signed in October 1867 and make every effort to avert possible hostilities. Both Comstock and Grover reported to General Sheridan through Lieutenant Beecher.

On Friday, August 14, 1868, Comstock and Grover came into Hays. Next day they went on to the camp of Black Kettle (or perhaps Turkey Leg) about thirty miles from Monument. Just after dark an Indian runner came into the village with the news that four Indians had been killed and ten wounded in a fight with soldiers on the Saline River. The Cheyennes immediately drove Comstock and Grover out of camp.

About two miles away they were overtaken by a party of seven warriors who appeared friendly and for awhile accompanied them on their ride. Suddenly, however, the Indians fell behind, lifted their rifles and fired into the backs of the scouts. Comstock was killed instantly, and Grover, wounded, fell from his horse. The Indians, apparently thinking both men were dead, rode away.

All day Monday Grover hid in the tall grass and that night reached a

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point on the railroad about seven miles west of Monument and twenty-five miles east of Fort Wallace. Fortunately he was able to flag a passing train which took him into Monument. Later he was taken to Fort Wallace and placed in the post hospital. For days he lay unconscious, wracked with fever, too ill even to be questioned about his experience.

Finally he recovered sufficiently to enlist in the band of scouts being recruited by Maj. Forsyth. As chief of scouts he participated in the bloody battle on the Arikaree the middle of September.

In spite of his endurance and pluck, Grover himself was finally killed at Pond City just outside Fort Wallace on February 16, 1869, by a man named John Henry. Some say he was killed because in reality he, not the Cheyennes, had murdered Comstock in an effort to acquire the Rose Creek ranch. Grover did own the ranch for a short time but whether he was guilty of killing his partner, only he and William Comstock will ever know.

Lost Frozen Blood

(Continued from page 11)

face above the man lying prone. As the last crash died away, Windy was reloading when the man appeared upright. Carrying his rifle at trail he dashed off wildly to the north, screaming at every jump like a creature damned.

Windy leaped up and followed as fast as he could sprint. The man passed close enough to the campsite to see the mule, and Windy feared he would kill it. Yet that did not happen. The stranger ran past the animal without slowing down and disappeared into the rolling wasteland. Puzzled, Windy retired to a grass cove where the mule could be hidden, and waited for morning.

At dawn he took up the man's trail which led straight north for several miles before curving west across the valley. At mid-morning, Windy found a cave-like hole in a ridge. Evidence in and around it revealed that a man had lived there like a wild animal for some time. What few miserable possessions he owned had been taken away. Judging from the bones scattered around, his diet must have been largely rabbits. Empty food tins—obviously part of Windy's grub—were also strewn about. The man's trail headed on north in the direction of Black Mountain and its maze of canyons.

Now it seemed that Windy would be free of visitors for awhile, and returning to work he prospected a flat for two days before a native policeman, Salawa Begay, and two Navajos approached him. They rode up, sitting their horses a few moments before exchanging greetings.

The policeman, from the Tuba City agency, spoke in broken English. He said that the men with him had been riding homeward up Denebeto Wash two nights before when they heard considerable gunfire. They had gone on to the agency, reporting the circumstance. Windy told them about the unknown man who had been shooting at him, and described the place where he had holed up like an animal. Salawa Begay translated that to the old men who somberly nodded their heads.

"It's a crazy white man," Salawa Begay explained. "He come here from the Piutes at Willow Springs. Was there long time. Now him gone Black Mountain. Mebbe so no catch. Mebbe so him come back kill you."

"Crazy or not, what does he care if I pick up these red stones?"

"No want other white men around, mebbe so. Him been in big house long time. Run away from there. Mebbe so think white man come take him back. Lock up for good. Crazy man no like. You savvy?"

"Sure. He escaped from jail, a prison?"

"Not same. Big house where white mens put crazy white mens. You savvy?"

"He ran away from a nut house."

"Mebbe so you go away before crazy man kills?"

"I've got enough grub to last three or four more days. He won't come back that soon."

When they departed, Windy returned to hunting garnets, glad that he had not killed the poor lunatic, although running around half starved, in rags and fearful all the time, might make his present life seem little better than death.

The next day Windy found the garnets. They were in beds of gravel and dirt just off the east side of Denebeto Wash. They glistened in the sun, even in the rough, and looked exactly like what they were called—frozen blood. When Polman had claimed they could be "shoveled up," he had told the truth. Raking a pile together, Windy sorted out a pocketful, separating them from tiny particles of sandstone, bits of quartz and a black substance seen often in ant hills. Then, since it was near sundown, he returned to camp.

The next morning, with the sun hidden behind clouds, he moved to the side of Denebeto Wash and started piling gravel into peaks. Taking out only the largest gem stones, Windy filled a gallon water bucket from only three of these piles. Intensely engrossed in the stupenduous find, he took no notice of the lowering black clouds until thunder rolled and lightning flashed across the sky.

"Might come on a rain," he told himself unworriedly, "but looks like it's going to be up there in the mountains."

THE CLOUDS seemed heaviest over Black Mountain to the north. Continuing his work he emptied part of another bucket of garnets into a sack. A few drops of rain fell, then a gray shower crossed the valley spitting up dust. Soon the mountains were blotted out, and the mesas toward Hotevilla Hopi village.

Part of another bucket had gone into the sack when a strange roar began dinning into his ears. The mule grazed some distance away and created no sound. Glancing up the Denebeto, Windy suddenly froze in his tracks. At first he couldn't credit it. The wash seldom ran water more than twice a year. Yet if he could believe his eyes, a wall of muddy water was rolling toward him with the speed of an express train. It extended far across both sides of the wash, inundating the flats on each. The far end, he noticed without real comprehension, lashed against the sand hills tearing the near slopes apart.

"Cloudburst!" he gasped incredulously. "A real whopper!"

Having time to grab only the sacked garnets, Windy sprinted for the mule. In one lift he tightened the saddle cinch which had been loosened for the mule's comfort while grazing, and hit leather. Escape to safety would be touch and go. As he kicked the mule into a run for high ground to the east, the roar of a fifteen-foot-high wall of water drowned out all other sound. He could see lightning flashes but could not hear the thunder in this darkened world.

The mule gained a sand hill. Fortunately no break existed between it and the next. As the mule and its rider crossed over, water curled and tore apart the slope they had ascended. Not slowing down until he had gained still a higher elevation, Windy looked over his shoulder in complete disbelief. Water filled the center of Denebeto Valley at least three quarters of a mile wide. The crest had already gone south, lengthening out even as he watched. A second wave, rolling logs, corral poles and hogan timbers came down behind the headrise. A moving black line half a mile behind it revealed more water pressing south toward the Little Colorado River. The spectacle awed Windy for a few moments, then he raced out of there.

The flood forced him to continue east and, due to the longer distance to ride, it was almost dawn before he reached Canyon Diablo trading post. Rain still fell and clouds covered the sky. In answer to determined pounding on the store door, Volz appeared sleepy-eyed and carrying a kerosene lamp.

"I need some dry clothes bad," were Windy's first words. "I'm cold, too." His teeth shook together.

"What happened?" Volz asked, helping the drenched man inside.

While stripping and getting into warm garments off the store shelves, Windy told about the monster cloudburst which had almost caught him.

"Such flash floods sometime happen," Volz nodded. "I've seen a few. Well, fortunately no Indians or stock were in the Denebeto."

"I've sure got something to show you." Going outside to the mule he removed the sack and carried it into the store. Volz's eyes windened as the red stones were spilled onto the counter top. More than twice as many as Howe brought in altogether!

The two men talked, Windy relating what had happened, until the family summoned them to breakfast. Enthusiastic, Volz planned that they would return to the garnet beds in a wagon with a revolving drum and maybe get a ton of them!

"We'll have to wait a week or ten days," he said. "It will be that long before the ground dries out and hardens enough to break free of the stones when shoveled into the drum."

Because of the delay Windy decided to spend several days at home, and caught the train to Flagstaff. Volz did not think it necessary to caution him against disclosing their discovery. Walker was best known as "Windy" because of the impossible tales he often spun, and if he talked at all Volz considered it unlikely that anyone would believe him. Of course Windy couldn't keep quiet, bragging around town that with a ton of garnets he would soon be a rich man.

Sometimes a windy-yarner tells the truth. More than a dozen men concluded that Walker did this time. They rode across the river at Grand Falls into the Denebeto before the mud dried, camping in the sand hills. The wash still ran some water and flood damage lay everywhere. Small hillocks and sand dunes had been flattened out. Grass and sagebrush on each side of the wash was covered, or partly so, and resembled one vast mud flat. In some places the soil had been worked away down to bedrock.

Four days elapsed before they could venture over the lower ground without bogging to their knees. They found only coarse gravel, no garnets. After three days of hard work around the drying edges of mud the bunch gave up hunting. The consensus was, "Old Windy never told the truth in his life!"

THREE of them did not take kindly to being lied to and, very angry, rode south to Canyon Diablo. Windy was in the store preparing to start for the Denebeto with Volz. Cornered by a burly, wrath-filled man he was charged with gross deceit.

"There's wagonloads of garnets up there!" he sputtered.

"You lied. There ain't no garnets."

Volz lifted up the seamless sack from below the counter. Rolling the sides down level with the red stones he merely pointed a finger. The disappointed men gathered close, fingering them in amazement that so many had been recovered.

"We'll go back with you and stake our claims," decided the man who had berated Windy.

"We're not going soon," Volz told him. "And when we do we'll consider it unfriendly for you to follow." An old-time Indian trader, Volz was a tough man to buck. After wheedling and gaining nothing, the three rode off.

Volz did not take Windy to task for talking unwisely, and early the following morning in a wagon loaded with supplies and the barrel drum, they drove north behind four horses. Camping one night at Newberry Mesa they headed west into the Denebeto Valley. The old, smooth, windblown surface of the flats was now covered with a new, deep deposit of mud and sand. Moreover, the flood had shifted the wash channel in several places.

"Never mind all that," Windy said with enthusiasm. "I can go straight to the right place five miles on north."

That night they camped where the rifle fire had been exchanged. Windy pointed out the bullet marks on the blocks of stone. At sunup he marked a course towards Denebeto Wash and followed it to just short of the dirt bank.

Though all the grama grass and most of the sagebrush was covered up, he started digging. Down deep enough he found the old surface, distinguished by fine gravel. The hole was then widened. But neither man found a garnet.

All day long they toiled under a hot sun, digging up and down the wash. The next day Volz cautioned Windy to look the area over carefully, trying to fix the right location by landmarks. Windy did so, selecting two possible places, and they wasted four days flinging dirt and gravel.

One night at the end of the week, while sitting beside the cooking fire eating, a bullet whined into the coffee pot, followed by a rifle crash. Flattening himself out toward the wagon, Windy went for his rifle. Unarmed, Volz leaped up and sped out of the firelight. With the next shot he stumbled and fell, but was unwounded.

Probably thinking he had killed them both, the crazy man trotted into camp laughing wildly. A scarecrow, his long beard and hair were matted with filth. Dropping his rifle he seized some food in both hands and bolted it down like a man long starved, which in fact he was. While he was engaged in eating, Windy seized his arms from behind, pinning him to the ground. Volz came in to help and the insane man was secured. He appeared to be about thirty-five years old.

The center of the valley had changed so much with the flood that Volz had little faith that Windy could ever relocate the flat where the garnets had lain. It might even have been washed away.

In the morning he said, "Windy, this crazy man has to be taken in to the authorities. I'll start now and by fast driving can make it just after sundown tonight. Do you want to stay here and keep hunting?"

That was agreed to and Volz returned to Canyon Diablo. The county sheriff at Flagstaff was notified. He sent a deputy down by train to pick up Volz's unwanted guest. Several days later Windy's mule was returned to him by an Indian, Volz being unable to leave the trading post. After wasting two weeks hunting alone, Windy came in with their drum and equipment.

"Quitting?" Volz asked.

"For now. Rest up a spell and maybe I can remember exactly what covered-up flat the garnets are in."

Three times more that year Windy returned to his searching, but not one red garnet did he find. His share of those previously recovered kept him grubstaked to do other prospecting.

No one else searched for the gems. However, in the late 1890s Indians brought in a few stones from somewhere in Denebeto Valley, selling them at Wolf Post and Canyon Diablo for fifty cents each. By 1900 the price had dropped until they were hardly worth picking up. Styles had changed in women's jewelry.

In recent years E. G. Williams of Flagstaff went into the valley somewhere, bringing out three small glass jars of dark red garnets. Today they have little value and only rockhounds would be interested in searching for them. But if garnets should become in vogue again, there by the Denebeto rests a great treasure for the finder.

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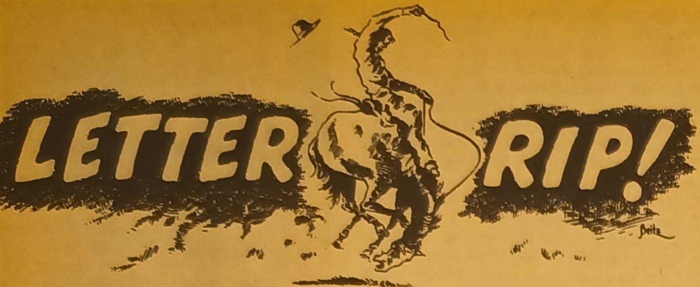


LETTER RIP!

Gentlemen:

I have been reading your magazines for many years. The one tale that opened my eyes and caused me to read the story twice was "The Making of a Renegade," the tale about Navaho Frank in the Spring 1969 OLD WEST. Surely he was a great warrior. I am a full-blood Navaho myself from Gallup, New Mexico and have heard my people tell stories about being in prison at Fort Sumner. In 1868, only a hundred years ago, our ancestors made the long walk back to our homeland after four years in prison. The tale has a sad end for Navaho Frank but it made me wish to have lived in those times.

Your magazines are always very interesting, but how about running more stories on the first American—the Indian!—Jimmy Roy Chee, 1419 Grand Street, Alameda, California 94501

Gentlemen:

I am very much interested in John Winslowe's article on Navaho Frank or Francisco Tafoya in the Spring 1969 OLD WEST, especially as so much of the background material comes from the Spanish-speaking Americans of New Mexico.

Governor Otero's comments are important but there are still so many important details of the Lincoln County War withheld even by the present generation that only when these facts come to light will the story of New Mexico truly become history.

I would like to add this much to Mr. Winslowe's excellent article. Frank T. Encinias of Santa Rosa, New Mexico, a former State Representative, says in his very informative little handbook that Francisco Tafoya was in Hargrove's saloon at Fort Sumner January 10, 1880 when Joe Grant was shot to death by William Bonney in a "little game for two" as Bonney later explained.

It is quite probable that Grant's derogatory remarks about Tafoya sparked an already explosive situation. Mr. Encinias has photos of both Jesus Silva and Jose Lovato, who were also present, and it was Lovato who whispered, "Cuidado Billy te mata," that put Bonney on guard.

It is also interesting to note that a Desiderio Romero, sheriff of San Miguel County, tried to take Dave Rudabaugh from Pat Garrett in December 1880 and that Sheriff Hilario Romero made Tafoya so available to the mob in June 1882.

My thought on the entire story of New Mexico is that the separating of the chaff from the wheat—the piling up of new wheat and the reculls of the chaff—eventually brings out history.—Charles C. Packer, 727 West 11th Street, Freeport, Texas 77541

Dear Editor:

A few comments on Mr. Winslowe's story, "The Making Of A Renegade" in the Spring 1969 OLD WEST.

After reading the account of Navaho Frank's tragic existence, I term it "How to Reduce a Person to a 'Happening'."

This historic tale of yesterday bears its own testimony to the oft-quoted statement that yesterday built today; today is its hangover.—Mrs. James F. Hodges, 2214 Phoenix Street, Saginaw, Michigan 48601

Dear Sir:

Like William O'Nan ("Letter Rip!," Spring 1969 OLD WEST), I too am a native of Marion County, Missouri and my grandmother, Belle Layton, was also living in Palmyra, Missouri in 1855 until after the Civil War. I recall her telling about the Palmyra massacre. I would like to correspond with anyone concerned with swapping stories about the cholera epidemic, the occupation by McNeil's federal troops, the Palmyra massacre or the Negro slave's murder of two children on Brower's Branch.

Does anyone know of Bob Schultz, Morgan Bixley, Madison Payne or Dr. Moore, my grandfather? These people lived in and around Palmyra about the same time as William O'Nan.—William M. Brower, 917 South Mason Street, Chicago, Illinois 60644

Dear Sir:

There are about a thousand men here at the Veterans Administration Domiciliary who read magazines by the hour and it is a worthwhile pastime. We enjoy your magazines the most as they are full of good true stories. I was wondering if any of your readers have any back issues which they would be kind enough to send us free of charge. We would be thankful for any sent us.

If your readers would send them to me, I will see that they are passed around to the men here to be read. We pass around the ones we have until they are all worn out. Thank you very much for this consideration.—Rae West, c/o Veterans Administration Domiciliary, White City, Oregon 97501

Dear Joe:

Your story about "Indian" John Nelson in the Spring 1969 OLD WEST was especially interesting to me because this John Nelson was a brother-in-law to my maternal great-grandmother, and two of his nephews married sisters who were cousins to my father. As a child I heard the story of John Nelson from my mother and other members of the family and can add a bit of authentic information to the story.

After John Nelson ran away from his home in the East and later left the home of relatives in Missouri, he was swallowed up by the great glamorous West like so many adventurous young men of that time. His family heard no more of him except for a grapevine rumor that he had "joined the Indians." His survival was doubtful and he became the subject of a family legend.

Years later other members of the family followed the migratory trend westward and two younger brothers, Tom and Jim, became farmers in Greenwood County, Kansas. In 1893 Tom, who had married a widow who was my great-grandmother, went to Chicago to take in the Columbian Exposition. While there he saw Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show where he saw and heard of a famous "squawman," John Nelson, one of the featured participants in the show. It occurred to Tom that this might possibly be his long-lost brother who had mysteriously disappeared so many years before. He contacted John Nelson and learned that he was indeed his missing brother!

After that show season was over John Nelson went to Kansas and made an extended visit with his brothers and his mother. My mother, who was still in her teens, liked to comb his long hair, which pleased the old man, and he gave her an autographed portrait of Buffalo Bill Cody and one of himself. These portraits taken in different Chicago studios probably in 1893, are still in good condition and are now in my possession.

This visit of a featured performer in the famous Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show created quite a stir in that rural community, much to the disgust of brother Tom who refused to believe many of the stories that John told. John was a great storyteller and, like John Colter, discoverer of Yellowstone Park, his stories were not given complete credence by everyone.

John's mother spent her last years with Tom and I think she outlived John because I can remember her around 1904 when she was about ninety-five years of age and totally blind.

There is a picture of John Nelson and his Indian family in the museum at Buffalo Bill's grave on Lookout Mountain, Colorado. In August 1968 I was through the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota where I was informed that there were many Nelsons in the adjoining Pine Ridge Reservation. I did not have time to look them up but I have no doubt they are descended from this famous frontiersman.—Charles M. Hallett, 6919 Oleatha Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63139

Dear Editor:

I would like to hear from friends who can help me with film material on Rin Tin Tin, king of dog stars, with stills, press books, and photoplay editions.

I have formed a Rinty Memorial Club for him. I will be very happy to hear from folks in the film world who can help me with the Rin Tin Tin film material.—Mr. Lorang Berg, c/o Rinty Memorial Club, Bryndumsvej 8. sttv., Silkeborg 8660, Denmark

Dear Joe:

The "sour dock" and "sheep showers" greens eaten by the Red Hills people of Oklahoma (Summer OLD WEST 1968) still are gathered and eaten by certain persons who specialize in many different herbs, wild fruits, and what most people call "weeds."

The sour dock is probably yellow dock and us kids (forty-five years or more ago) used to strip off the cluster of brown seeds and make "sour chew" out of them and called it "Indian tobacco." We used to take the heart out of wild sunflowers and wild daisies and sniff it up our nose. It made us sneeze like hell but we thought it was fun and called it Indian snuff (maybe because we learned it from the Winnebagos who had a village a mile from our homestead).

We also ate the sheep showers which we called salty grass, and the proper name is sheep sorrel or goat weed, because the leaf is shaped like a goat's head. The leaves have a sort of salty or briny taste, and the Indians were eating this plant long before white men showed up in this country. There are many plants that can be used for food, or as a herb to treat many ailments, illness and injuries if a person will take time to look them up and study these remedies.

Wild dandelion leaves make tasty greens, and the blossoms mixed with sliced oranges, raisins, lemons, and other ingredients will make fine dandelion wine. Us kids used to steal samples of it from a batch made by Dad and we'd get a slight case of "Where-am-I?" from it, then probably get horsewhipped for stealing his good wine. He also made the best home brew for many miles around, and sometimes he'd get thirsty and then he'd be his own best customer.

Another bad weed that makes good greens is the young plant of the burning nettle. I never ate any, but got my bare legs and feet stung by them during the years that I hardly knew what shoes were and the style was strictly knee pants.

In later years a neighbor boy got his legs badly stung one night while hurrying away from a farmer's chicken coop. I told him later that he was lucky the farmer was a sound sleeper, otherwise he'd have been stung with birdshot along with the nettles. (One of the other fellows got the chicken!)

Following are several of these recipes for wild plants that are good to eat and for medical purposes too, which I'm sending down for the benefit of your readers. I gave a copy of them to a lady who writes recipes for a local paper, but she considered it an insult and threw them away. She should have lived in the country!

"Sorrel Soup" (Sheep Sorrel). Use a handful of sorrel weeds, wash them and put them in an open sauce pan with a little water. Put four cups of milk with a small white (whole) onion in a double boiler, add two tablespoons of butter and the same amount of flour, thoroughly blended to avoid lumps, to the hot milk. Let stand, then add sorrel and strain. Then season to taste. Some people like to add the juice of half a lemon before serving. The soup should be served with hard boiled eggs cut in quarters, then sprinkled with crushed melba toast which has been fried lightly with butter.

The leaves of the young sorrel plant are very refreshing when eaten raw. They can also be substituted for sour things and used in many different ways such as in making delicious soups and sauces, or as a seasoning for fish, rice, or potatoes, or mixed with other salad greens.

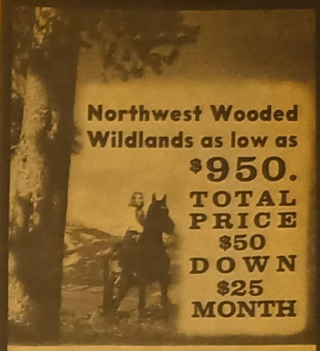
"Lamb's Quarter" or "Pigweed." The young leaves and tops make a salad or may be cooked as greens. The dried or slightly cooked seeds may be ground into a flour. This plant can be used as a superior green vegetable, and it's a pity it isn't used more generally. Some people claim it tastes better than spinach. The booklet, "Common Edible Plants," lists seventy-five different plants which may be used for food, and the plants are described and pictured in the booklet.

Dandelion In Sour Cream. Gather the young, tender leaves of the dandelion, wash well and boil, taking care not to overcook them. If you don't like the bitter taste you should change the water once or twice. Prepare separately chopped bacon or ham and fry together with chopped onion. Add the cooked dandelion leaves and saute for a few minutes. Season and serve with sour cream dressing. (With a good appetite you can eat the neighbors out of house and home and weeds!)—Walt Thayer, Box 75, Wenatchee, Washington 98801

Dear Editor:

My Grandpa Johnson's picture appears on page 84 of the Spring 1967 OLD WEST. He was a cook for the Texas Rangers. His name was Tomas Samuel Johnson but he was called Tom and he lived in Austin. When Grandma Johnson died they owned some land where the railroad depot is. Grandma had been an invalid for several years after her last child was born. She died around 1892. Grandpa was a Ranger then.

All of the family of this generation have passed on now except his grandchildren. We would love to know if any old-timer knows anything about the Johnsons back then and if he has any relations living there yet. We have been told our former President was related but don't know for sure. Grandma is buried in Austin. Her name was Lummis Anna Johnson. We found another write-up on Grandpa in *Western Horseman*, with a picture of him and the other Rangers of Company B.—Mrs. J. C. (Mary E.) Wilson, 1900 Ocotillo Drive Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310



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"Yellow Kid"

(Continued from page 17)

for the smoker. The banker was tempted to follow but instead arranged himself so that he might occasionally steal a glance at the woman. She was evidently aware of his interest and in an attempt to rearrange the bags and pillows upset a brief case which was lying open on the seat. A small tin box tumbled out and landed on the floor, spilling some dirt and small ore specimens in the aisle.

The president of the Sage Creek National Bank was down on his knees immediately assisting her to rescue the specimens. He did not make a particularly impressive figure as he flattened out face downward in order to reach a stray nugget that had rolled under the seat. As he arose red-faced and puffing, the woman's companion returned.

"Come here, Alton," she smiled, "and help me thank this gentleman for picking up your pets."

THE MAN advanced with a cordial greeting. With such a very informal introduction, the three travelers were soon talking as though they were old acquaintances.

"So you live in northern Wyoming?" asked the owner of the ore specimens. "Have you ever heard of the Blue Cliff Mine?"

"Yes, indeed, it's not far from my home. It was a good paying property for years but it has run down terribly," the banker answered.

"Just as I surmised. I'm glad we did not take time to go up there this trip. The owner tried hard to interest me, but it just didn't sound good."

Langtree had taken a decided liking to the couple. The woman, bright and attractive, talked just enough to keep the conversation flowing smoothly but never interrupted their discussions of business or financial topics.

The men exchanged stories of poor and good investments. Langtree mentioned that he was on his way to Chicago to make a semi-speculative investment.

"I don't mind stating," he remarked, "that I'll be able to tell as soon as I see the man who is promoting the investment proposition whether it's a safe one. I take pardonable pride in my ability to size up most men."

"By George! That's a great asset," commented the stranger, "that's where you have the edge on most of us. I wish you could meet and give me your opinion of a man who has been promoting a big mining deal down in Peru. I've been mighty anxious to get a line on him. I bought a lot of his stock and I've never been quite sure of either the man or the stock. But according to reports that I believe authentic, the mine looks very good. Here are some of the certificates of the Silver Crest, as it is called." He pulled out some certificates from his brief case.

"I've never dabbled much in stocks or taken any fliers in the mining game," the banker laughed. "In my position I can't afford to risk other people's money."

"The stock game, in itself, is a risky one," the mining man admitted, "but I simply can't resist buying something that looks good when I get some 'inside information.' "

As Langtree was wondering what profession his new acquaintance followed, the man continued.

"I've cabled a friend to try to find out anything he can about this mine in Peru and if he makes a favorable report I'm going to load up on the stock. It is closely held and hard to get."

As the hours wore on, the banker made inquiries regarding stock values and dividends and found his companion thoroughly versed in the subject. Incidentally, the latter showed him several receipts for stocks that he had picked up while on his trip.

"I intended to investigate a very substantial proposition in Chicago, but after hearing about all the money to be made in the stock market, I'm wavering," admitted Langtree.

"Better play it safe," his new friend warned. "Let the market alone."

Only a few hours of the journey remained when the conversation turned to hotels in Chicago.

"I'm going to wire ahead for our rooms at the S--- and will be glad to include one for you, if you'd like," suggested the mining man. "Or, perhaps you have a regular stopping place," he added. "Just thought we could make one wire do, if not."

The Westerner readily agreed and in a few hours found himself in front of the S--- Hotel alighting from a taxi with his new friends. He also found it useless to remonstrate with Brown who insisted upon paying the cab driver.

Later as they were making their way to their assigned rooms, Langtree suggested that they have dinner with him the following evening. His invitation was accepted. Brown drew a card from an expensive leather case and handed it to the banker, remarking as he did so that in all the time spent together, they had not yet learned one another's name. Cards were exchanged.

Langtree was plainly impressed by the treatment accorded the couple by the hotel attendants. He wished he might associate with such people regularly instead of having to return home to rub elbows with the so-called "elite" of his cow country town.

"J. Alton Brown" was the name on the engraved card which Langtree held in his hand when he found himself alone in his room. The name, in itself, meant nothing to him then, but shortly it would mean a great deal.

HE TOOK OFF his collar, tie and coat preparatory to a little rest. Seating himself near a table he picked up a copy of a recent *American Magazine* and opening the book at random began to turn the pages. Suddenly he sat upright as he found himself looking at a remarkable likeness of the man he had just left. Momentarily he stared, then suddenly saw that the picture was captioned: "J. Alton Brown—the Mining Wizard."

Quickly he read the two pages devoted to the story of the success of Brown who, it was stated, was the foremost geologist of Latin-America and had accumulated a large fortune due to investments in mining properties.

"I knew it!" Langtree said under his breath. "I knew the minute I laid eyes on him that he was a big man!"

The next day Langtree could not seem to bring himself to go about the work which had brought him to the Windy City nor did he make his usual trek to see Tim Murray. He wanted to see the Mining Wizard again before committing his money to any propositions.

At last seven o'clock came and the banker escorted his guests in to dinner. This, however, was only the beginning of a series of parties and motor rides to all of which the banker was a most welcome addition. The Browns had a few days' leisure in Chicago and seemed glad to include the Westerner in many of their daily activities.

On the third evening, the two men were in Langtree's room smoking when Brown said he had received a cable from his friend in South America saying that the Peruvian deal was a money-maker. Brown had scarcely finished explaining that he had wired to New York for a block of the stock when Mrs. Brown knocked on the door saying, "Alton, you are wanted on long distance. New York is calling."

Brown hurried to his room across the hall. In his haste he left the doors open so that Langtree plainly overheard the conversation.

"Well," he heard Brown say, "I can offer you $50,000 for your holdings, but that is the best I shall do just now. Yes, you can have the payment in cash if you come to Chicago."

When Brown returned to Langtree's room he said, "That fellow is holding out for more money than I am willing to pay. I believe, though, that he will come across at my terms. I know of a few blocks of the stock which sold for ridiculously low prices but the mine then was a mere prospect. Now, according to the cable, there are several thousand tons of high grade silver ore already blocked out. Soon that stock cannot be had at any price, so I'm picking up all I can now."

Until a late hour the men talked about all kinds of investments and of general business conditions. Although Langtree was anxious to broach the subject of a good investment for his own funds, possibly in some of the Silver Crest itself, he felt Brown would probably let him in on something when the time was right.

That night Langtree did not sleep very well. Even by conjuring up all his old ideas of safety in investment, he couldn't get his mind off his neighbors across the hall. At last, promising himself that he would drop around to see Tim Murray soon, he fell asleep.

But all of the banker's plans were abandoned the next morning as he joined Mrs. Brown for a short ride into the country. Brown was attending to some business, she explained, but would be through at noon. The bank president had reached the point where he could thoroughly enjoy her company without the presence of Brown. She had, he decided, about the most gracious manner of any woman he had ever met.

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When they returned from a delightful ride, Brown was waiting for them at the hotel.

"My man just arrived from New York with the Crest stock and is going to let me have it for $50,000 spot cash. He has a queer notion, though, as he wants me to bring the money to his room at the hotel. I don't care about carrying that much around as I'm quite well known in the financial district," Brown explained. "Will you go along and carry the money for me, Langtree?"

They started for the bank at once. Langtree was pleased with the confidence placed in him. Brown wrote out a check for $50,000 and passed it through the teller's window. Without hesitation the teller counted out the money.

Langtree admitted that even in his capacity of bank president he was not accustomed to carrying around such large cash sums.

"Within two months I expect to double that amount," said Brown decisively. "That stock is worth twice its par value right now but that fact is not generally known."

THE TRIP to the bank filled the Westerner with a greater desire for more money—easy money—and after Brown had closed the deal with the New Yorker and had come to Langtree's room to show him the new stock, the banker broached the subject which was uppermost in his mind.

"I planned to invest about $14,000 in a proposition here in Chicago," he said, "but if you would be willing to tip me off to something a little more remunerative, I would surely appreciate it."

"Well," Brown hesitated. "I don't give advice as I might have a poor hunch and I certainly could never forgive myself if anyone should be let down on my account."

Although the banker assured him that he was willing to take his chances and would not holler about the outcome, Brown still was unwilling to recommend anything. Nothing more was mentioned in connection with business that evening and the trio had a fine dinner followed by a theater party to celebrate the acquisition of the stock.

While Langtree was dressing the next morning, the telephone rang.

"Hello, there. This is Brown," said the voice. "If you are still interested in seeing me through in my present plan of collaring all the Silver Crest obtainable, you might like to ride up to a small burg north of the city with me in the car this morning. I'm on the trail of one more block. From all that I've heard, I'll need your support as the old fellow who owns the stock is said to be a hard-headed old miser." It did not take Langtree long to accept the invitation.

The high-powered car raced along over the smooth country roads and in less than an hour entered the main street of a small village.

"I'm not sure of the directions from here," Brown said as he pulled the car to the curb.

"Pardon me," he addressed a woman who was looking into a shop window. "Could you please tell me where H. M. Miller lives?"

"Do you mean the old man who owns the big estate? The miser?" she asked.

"Yes. That's the one."

"Well, old H. M. lives in the big country place down the road three miles. It has iron dogs on top of the gate. You can't miss it."

"Thank you," Brown tipped his hat and the car started on.

Langtree had visions of being met by a retinue of servants but when they entered the gates with the iron dogs on top, no one greeted them. From the front, the place appeared to be vacant. They left the car and walked around through an overgrown garden to the back of the mansion.

An old gray-haired man was sawing blocks of wood with a cross-cut saw.

"Does H. M. Miller live here?" Brown asked.

"That's me. What d'ye want?" snapped the old fellow, pausing with the saw still in the log.

"I would like to talk business with you," Brown began.

"Go ahead. Here's where most of my business is done," said the elderly man in indifferent tones.

Brown talked to him for a few minutes and guardedly answered several questions. Then he started with an offer of $40,000 and finally worked up to $50,000 for a block of stock. The old man still showed little interest. At last though, he put down his saw and rubbed his hands together as if contemplating handling $50,000.

"I guess you can have the stuff, if it's all right with the old lady," and he started up the path toward the house. He had covered only part of the distance when the door opened and a big, rather rough-looking woman came down the walk to meet him. They held a hurried consultation with the result that the woman declared open warfare. Shaking her fist she said:

"No, you don't get that stock. You're jest thieves come to rob my old man and me. I haven't any use for your likes. You're jest trying to beat us out of some money. If the stock's worth $50,000 to you, it's worth a lot more to us. Go long with you—you robbers."

Brown continued to argue but finally decided that it was no use. Before leaving, however, he wrote his telephone address on one of his cards and slipped it into the old man's hand.

On the return trip to Chicago, Brown said he felt that the pair would reconsider and let him have the stock but probably would demand more money.

"He certainly can't have any idea of the potential value of the mine," Brown said. "He's just afraid to let go on general principles."

AFTER HE and Brown parted, Langtree kept thinking that perhaps he could talk the old man into the deal. He wished that he had the ready cash to try it. He finally became so enthusiastic that he began to think what he might do with the profits. Then he realized that he was actually planning to doublecross the man who had been such a good friend to him. He was ashamed of himself for harboring such an idea even for a second. He thought of home and how already he had prolonged his visit. But he couldn't return for a day or two, that was certain. There might still be a chance of making a deal which would repay him well for the additional time he had spent in the city.

The idea came to him that he needed some dental work done. That would keep him longer in Chicago and would be a good excuse. Once more he consulted Brown, this time to have him recommend a dentist. Brown seemed delighted when he heard of Langtree's decision to stay a few days more.

After Brown had made a dental appointment for the following morning, Langtree decided to drop in to see his old friend, Tim Murray.

"Well, well, come right in, old scout," Murray slapped him on the shoulder and pulled up a chair.

As they talked over old times, Murray set out a dozen or more photographs on his desk.

"Have you still got that detective bug in your system?" he asked the banker. "Here are some new additions to our rogues' gallery. Maybe you'd like to look them over."

Langtree enthusiastically began to examine the photographs of the men "Wanted."

"Who's that?" he pointed to one near Murray.

"That's the Yellow Kid, a slick operating con man." Murray then went into details about the Kid's history.

When Langtree left the detective's office an hour later and returned to his hotel, his head was reeling with details, crooks, plots, and what not! He was, though, the cordial host at dinner that night to the Browns.

The next morning at nine o'clock he reached the dentist's office and the latter went to work. Soon the office girl interrupted to say that a messenger had brought a letter for Mr. Langtree and was waiting for a reply.

Langtree hastily tore open the envelope. The note was from Brown saying that old man Miller had suddenly dropped in on him and was ready to do business. The note in part read:

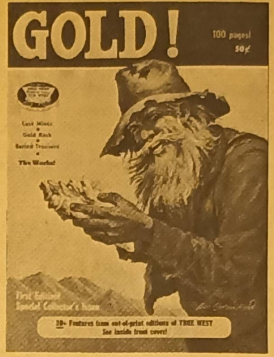
"As might be expected, he wants $62,000 for his stock and he wants it right now. Even as I am writing he may be on his way. I have only about $50,000 ready cash this morning so if you can let me have your check for the additional $12,000, I'll be mighty grateful. I'm enclosing a receipt. You can keep the stock for security until I can reimburse you tomorrow or next day. Or, you can retain an interest in it. We can talk this over later.

Brown."

Langtree hastily wrote a check for $12,000 payable to J. Alton Brown. He handed it to the girl and settled back in the dentist's chair. His excitement helped erase some of the discomfort from the drill.

When at last he descended in the elevator to the street he hailed a cab.

"Drive like the devil," he said, as he climbed aboard and gave Tim Murray's address.



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The wild dash through traffic which followed would have satisfied almost anyone's longing for a thrill. Thrusting a bill into the driver's hand as they pulled up to the curb, the banker hurried into Murray's Detective Bureau.

"What's the message?" he queried almost out of breath.

"Went off like clock-work. The Yellow Kid—J. Alton Brown—is wearin' bracelets now and they're not set with diamonds," the chief chuckled. "Biggest haul we've made in many a day. I always told you, you should have been a detective—"

"I didn't do anything except get off darned lucky by the skin of my teeth," grinned Langtree sheepishly. "What if I hadn't dropped in here yesterday and seen his picture in your gallery? Say, I'd have been minus about $12,000 right now. How'd you get him?"

"I had men covering every bank and the hotel. Pinch Reed got him when he tried to cash your check. Mrs. J. Alton Brown, 'Clever Kate,' got away but we'll pick her up later. They've been running the biggest bunco gang in the Middle West. This time we've caught 'em cold."

"Well, I never was so fooled in anyone," Langtree shook his head. "Why, there was that woman decoy in the small village who directed us to the Miller place, and those old folks at the estate—you say they were all members of the gang, and I swallowed it all—almost—"

"That was a good gag they worked with that insert which they had put in the *American Magazine*, wasn't it? They had two of the gang working in that hotel who planted the magazine in your room just before you arrived," Murray glanced at some notes on his desk.

"Guess I'll hit the trail for home tonight," Langtree sighed.

Three days later as he approached his bank in Sage Creek he was worried that someone might have gotten wind of what had detained him so long in Chicago. But everything seemed calm.

"Hello, Langtree," his vice-president greeted him. "Mighty glad to have you back. How are the teeth?"

"All right now, thanks. But I had an awful siege with a wisdom tooth. It's out now—but deliver me from another one!"

July Fourth at Lodge Pole

(Continued from page 7)

Abe Long Knife as Indian policeman to explain to Old Man Healy, the squawman sub-agent at Lodge Pole, or to the white man who held the government job as head stockman.

"It was me that done the shootin', Abe," I said with a grin. "I shot that Rafter T beef steer behind the ear. The Circle C outfit is donating it to your Fourth of July celebration," I lied. Pausing long enough to look Abe over, I then remarked, "You shore look handsome in that policeman's uniform, Abe. Shore handsome and you're a brave warrior."

Abe sat up straight in his Sears Roebuck saddle, like a lance had been shoved down his back, a proud smile on his dark swarthy face.

"Long time I wait," Abe measured each word before he spoke, "since I put my name in for this policeman's job. I was sworn in yesterday by the agent at Fort Belknap Agency. The Old Man is proud of me. I want no trouble here."

By that time the Studebaker dead X wagon, drawn by a pair of paint ponies, topped the skyline. One old woman drove the gentle team. Two other old squaws sat in the back of the wagon. As I watched them approach I was doing a little fast skull work.

"There's no need to report to the subagent or chief stockman about the Rafter T steer," I said. "Mebbe if you tell the old women to tan the hide I can use it for a rug in my cabin."

Abe nodded approval and his wide mouth spread in a slow grin. On such occasions he always addressed me by my Assiniboine name. "I tell them old womans about it, Ocksheebie," Abe promised.

Before Abe rode away he told me, showing his authority, that if I attended the ceremonial dances I had to leave my six-shooter at the sub-agency store. That was the rule for all white men and for the half-breed sons of squawmen who lived on the reservation.

I rode to the sub-agency with Roy Long-Knife, Jesse Iron Horn and Joe Walk Slow where they all shed their cowboy clothes, stripped down to clout and moccasins, put on war paint and strapped sleigh bell around their ankles to join in the all-night dances.

A sizeable number of reservation half-breed youths, mostly in their twenties, were lounging around, both inside and outside the store where I left my six-shooter after I'd stabled my horse at the barn. These youths took no part in the ceremonial dances and all wore cowpuncher garb, high-heeled boots, Stetson hats and Levi's. They would match horse races among themselves or they'd gather in small groups talking cattle and horses while they looked over the young girls.

The squawmen fathers of these youths would laze around in the shade of giant cottonwoods along the creek, or in the shadow of the log cabin store, while their full-blood wives watched or took part in the women's dances. Some of them were dressed in beaded buckskin ceremonial clothes, prideful of their Indian ancestry, for on such occasions wives of squawmen often visited their parents and female relatives.

Luke Deniff, who with his brother Sam were professional gamblers, had ridden in from town to set up a poker game in a tent near the large Indian camp's circle of tepees. A blanket was spread on the ground inside the tent and Luke sat cross-legged, tailor fashion, with poker chips banked in front of him. By the looks of men who drifted in and out of the tent Luke was doing a land office business.

WORD HAD PASSED among the white men and half-breeds that some bootlegger was peddling whiskey at a deserted log cabin on the creek half a mile below the sub-agency store. But I knew it was only a matter of time before somebody tipped off the Indian police who were riding around on the prowl for whiskey peddlers and the luckless bootlegger would be arrested and taken to the dally house at the Fort Belknap Agency—unless he was clever enough to escape on a horse fast enough to outrun the slow cayuse ponies of the Indian police.

I left my six-shooter with one of Old Man Healy's grown sons who was tending the store and headed on foot up the wagon road to the benchland where the Grass Dance was in full swing.

Before going any farther up the creek it might be a good idea for me to sort of explain about W. H. H. Healy, the sub-agent at Lodge Pole. In the Chouteau County Directory of 1907-1908 he is listed as Colonel Healy, and whether the military rank of colonel was the actual rank of the retired soldier or just a sort of honorary title bestowed on the sub-agent is a moot question. Healy was married to a full-blood Indian and was known both on the reservation and outside as a squawman. For the most part there was no stigma attached to the name. Many early pioneers of reputable standing in Montana Territory had married full-blood Indians because in the early days of pioneering white women were scarce. The offspring of these squawmen were naturally called half-breeds, and there was no stigma attached to being a half-breed. The average squawman was in no way ashamed of the fact that he had married an Indian, and for the most part those full-blood women were excellent wives and mothers, and their breed children had good reason to be proud of their Indian blood.

To cattlemen who had permits to graze stock on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, Col. Healy had the unsavory reputation of being a trouble-maker. It was said that if he had his say-so, no outside cattleman would be given permission to graze cattle within the confines of the reservation fence, notwithstanding that cattlemen paid grazing fees. It was common rumor and well-founded hearsay that Healy was in the habit of penning frequent letters to the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Washington in violent protest against the grazing permits, and he was wont to name any and every violation, real or imagined, on the part of the cowpunchers who were sent to ride on the reservation to oversee their owner's cattle.

In all fairness to Col. Healy let it be said that acting as sub-agent he had the welfare of the Indians in mind, that he was a dedicated man at heart. But to the cattlemen who held grazing permits he was a bothersome trouble-maker. They called him Old Man Healy, or Old Healy, purposely dropping the military rank. Outside cattlemen and their cowhands were often aroused enough to refer to the crippled sub-agent as that "damned squawman," or that "damned trouble-maker," and those were the lesser, milder terms applied to him.

It was common range gossip that Healy was using his government job for personal revenge, that he made use of the Indian police to harass the cowpunchers working for the big cattle outfits when the latter rode on the reservation to make sure none of their steers were being butchered by the Indians or squawmen, that no unbranded calves were mavericked and that their cattle were not being choused around by using pot hounds to dog outsiders' cattle. It was further rumored that the sub-agent secretly encouraged these unlawful practices and that the only crime involved was getting caught. Since the mounted Indian police were under Healy's supervision and took all orders from him, there was very little chance of their getting arrested.

Therefore during the years the somewhat bitter enmity between Healy and the cow outfits holding grazing permits increased. The feud was like a smoldering, neglected bonfire, needing only a gust of wind to fan the ashes into flame. Healy was outspoken in his opinions, as any man alive that ever incurred his righteous wrath will agree. During his years as a sub-agent at Lodge Pole he ruled the roost with a stern hand and undoubtedly he had his own reasons, both personal and governmental for the benefit of the Indians who were wards of Uncle Sam. There are two sides to every argument and perhaps in his heart Healy felt himself champion of the Indians and their welfare. He spoke freely of the frequent letters of protest he wrote to Washington.

I had never laid eyes on the man. I knew that he had been bed-ridden for the past years with a broken back and now used a wheel chair to get around. He lived in a log house across the wagon road from the store. As far as I was concerned, it made no never minds to me whether he was called Colonel or Old Man Healy, or what kind of a rep he had. I had come to spend the day at the ceremonial dances and I aimed to travel high, wide and handsome. That I was playing hooky added spice and zest to the adventure and I wouldn't have swapped my cowboy life with any city kid on earth, nor my Assiniboine name of Ocksheebie for the royal title of Crown Prince of England. I was proud that Old Black Dog, Assiniboine chief, was my godfather, and that boyhood pride of adoption was destined to last throughout my lifetime. And as far as I knew every full-blood and half-breed on the reservation was my friend.

HEALY, it was commonly rumored, hated the Circle C outfit, its owners, and cowhands who worked for the outfit. Circle C riders on the reservation had strict orders to keep in line, not violate any of the reservation laws. No Circle C cowhand was allowed to pack a bottle of whiskey and for the most part they obeyed that strict ruling. But, in spite of the ID law regarding firearms, Circle C cowpunchers did pack six-shooters in case they got into some tight such as getting pinned down by a horse stepping into a badger hole or getting fouled up in a ketch rope when roping a steer or wild cow that needed milking, or shooting coyotes or prairie wolves. So we all packed six-shooters regardless of the ID law. But no booze. Strictly no booze.

I would have liked to have joined in the dances but nobody but full-bloods were permitted to dance the Grass Dance and I reluctantly discarded my wishful thinking. The Grass Dance had several parts, including the Women's Circle Dance, where the women were allowed to select a male partner from the men spectators who sat in a circle on the ground by going over and touching her moccasin to his foot. Whereupon he would get to his feet and they would go back hand-in-hand to join the circle of dancers. Sometimes a man would dance with a woman on each side, or sometimes a woman between two men.

The Women's Circle Dance moved slowly to the left, by raising one foot at a time barely off the ground and then the other foot, keeping time to the beating of the drum, with the singers grouped around the drummers chanting the words of a song. It was only in recent years that the courtesy of choosing a partner to join the dance included a white man, but most full-blood young women were by nature and training too shy and bashful to ask any white man to join the Circle Dance.

I eased among the white section of spectators to watch the dance until it was time for me to head back to the ranch before I was missed. I never let on to any white man that I enjoyed the ceremonial dances for fear of being joshed about being a squawman.

JESSE IRON HORN, Roy Long Knife, Joe Walk Slow, Merlin Shield, Rufus Warrior and Herb Fisher, son of Old Fish Gut, and others too numerous to mention here, all boyhood friends, were dancing, stripped down to clout and moccasins and smeared with war paint.

After awhile the singers began chanting the Smoking Song. It was the signal they wished to rest, to sit and smoke a while. The drums became silent and the dancers sat down. None of the singers, dancers, or drummers had eaten that day. They would fast until midnight and eat only after the Dance of the Ten Songs was finished.

During the interval of rest the Old Men, dressed in ceremonial buckskins, with long eagle feather war bonnets, took turns getting to their feet to make their speeches, recounting the brave deeds of their warrior days. All of the Old Men, tribal chiefs and medicine men prided themselves on their oratory as they pantomimed their tales of counting coup. To me the speeches of the Old Men as they talked and acted out their heroic coups were fascinating.

When the speeches finally ended, the Camp Crier announced it was time for the Women's Circle Dance to continue. Then the leader of the Circle Dance announced, "It's time to admire the women as they dance. Let the women dance!"

The singers and drummers began and the dancers formed a circle, moving in slow cadence to the drum beat, circling to the left. After a short time the young women began picking their partners. I sat there and watched while Jesse Iron Horn, Roy Long Knife, Joe Walk Slow, Rufus Warrior and the others were chosen. Then as I was about to get up and slip away unnoticed a young girl about eighteen, dressed in beaded buckskins and squaw leggings, her long black hair hanging down below her waist in two thick braids, came over to where I sat cross-legged and touched my boot with her moccasined foot.

To the best of my knowledge I had never laid eyes on the girl before. Her cheeks and forehead were streaked with red powder and the red powder was rubbed carefully into the roots of her blue-black hair, so that I couldn't tell whether she was a full-blood or a half-breed. She was very pretty, small boned and slim, with large brown eyes and high cheek bones. Her lips parted in a bashful smile to show startling white teeth as she reached down to grab my hand and pull me to my feet.

"Ocksheebie," she said in a low tone and giggled as I scrambled awkward and embarrassed to my feet. She led me into the slow moving circle of dancers and it wasn't hard to lift my feet in the shuffling cadence of the drum beat. But I was painfully aware that my face was red under the layers of sun tan, and I was sweating a little, partly because of the hot sun but mostly because I was nervous. Nervous and tongue-tied. She was wholly aware of my embarrassment as she tilted her head sideways, her eyes looking at me with a flirting, teasing look, and for the first time I saw that her eyes were not brown but gray-green flecked with brown under heavy black brows. This good-looking girl was a half-breed, and only full-bloods were allowed to dance the Women's Circle Dance.

"What's your name?" I blurted out in a dry sort of half whisper.

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"That's for me to know and for you to find out," she laughed. This was a flippant wisecrack popular among school kids. I knew no full-blood Indian girl would ever have made such a slangy remark, and I told her so, but not in those words.

"You're not a full-blood Indian." It was sort of a statement, with a question thrown in for boot. "Or are you?" I managed a grin.

She gave me no answer for a while as we shuffled sideways, lifting one foot, then the other, dancing close together. She kept giving my coy looks, her eyes glinting in the last slanted rays of sundown.

"I'm part Injun," she said with light mockery, "part Irish." Her arm around my waist tightened a little and her fingertips dug into my ribs. "Mamma is a full-blood Assiniboine," she said after a short silence. "I'm one of Haggerty's breed brats. Wild Horse Pete Haggerty's only daughter."

I HAD NEVER met up with Wild Horse Haggerty, but everybody in the country knew him by reputation, and that squawman's rep was bad around the edges, as wild as his name. His ranch on Milk River, called Haggerty's Flat, was a hangout for renegades of all kinds. It was on the far northern end of the Fort Belknap Reservation. The borderline was Milk River where Haggerty had taken up his squawman's rights. He had bought up a couple-three homesteads on the opposite side of Milk River outside the reservation. He had three grown sons, and they were all chips off the old block. Wild Horse Haggerty raised horses. He had about 200 head of good brood mares and his studs were registered Morgan blood. His brand on both horses and cattle was the Flying H.

Instead of sending his children to the agency school they attended a white man's school at Harlem. The oldest boy was named Pete after his old man. The second oldest boy was nicknamed Tige, short for Tiger. The youngest boy was Buster. They were all a few years older than I. Good cowhands, good bronc riders, wild, tough, and I knew them all. But this was the first time I'd ever laid eyes on Haggerty's only daughter.

"How come you picked me?" I asked.

"Because I dared myself," came the somewhat puzzling reply. "It's the first time I ever took part in the Women's Circle Dance and I'm not supposed to be in the dance because I'm a half-breed. I went to mission school, then to business college in Great Falls to learn shorthand and typing because my old man wanted his kids to associate with white people. I'm a stranger here. That's my mother over there with the older women, wearing dark glasses because she is almost blind from cataracts. She's fat now, but when she married she was beautiful.

"I'm proud of my Assiniboine blood. And when mamma came here to visit her folks she brought me along. She made the buckskin dress I'm wearing. It was my own idea to join the Women's Circle Dance, and I dared myself to pick you for a partner. I saw you talking to my brother Buster at the store, and he told me who you are. Buster left an elkhide shirt my mamma made at the store to be raffled off at a dollar a ticket. I have all the tickets in my pocket because I don't have the gumption to peddle them to strange men."

I had seen the plain elkhide pullover shirt at the sub-agency store and thought I'd like to have it.

"How many tickets?" I asked.

"Twenty-five." She smiled.

"I got a ten dollar bill that's burnin' a hole in my pocket. Enough to buy ten tickets." I said.

"It's a deal." She dug into the pocket of her dress and pulled out the whole twenty-five tickets held together by a wide rubber band. She shoved them into my pocket and I handed her the ten dollar bill. "I'll borrow the extra fifteen bucks from Luke Deniff," I promised. "That way I'm a cinch to win the shirt."

MEANWHILE the sun had gone down, leaving a crimson and yellow war-painted afterglow. The singers were chanting the Smoking Song to announce a rest period. I had long since become aware of the curious glances and sly looks that Jesse Iron Horn and the others were giving me.

"Let's get away from here," the girl whispered close to my ear. "I've had enough of this dance to last me the rest of my life."

We managed to slip away without attracting too much attention and when we reached the circle of tepees she pointed to one of them and said, "That's Old Crazy Wolf's lodge. He's one of the tribal chiefs and a medicine man of the Assiniboines. Crazy Wolf is my grandfather." She spoke with pride.

There were several medium-sized wall tents located a short distance from the larger circle of tepees. These belonged to the squawmen and their families who had come from a distance to camp overnight for the ceremonial dances.

"Mamma and I are camped in the last tent where you see the buckboard. The others came in dead X wagons because they had large families, but for the two of us the buckboard was big enough to haul our bedrolls, tent and grub box. I drove the team. Buster came a-horseback with some of his Milk River breed cronies."

We had stopped near the last tent. "Give me half an hour to change clothes and scrub off the war paint," she said. "Then come on over and I'll rustle some ham sandwiches and potato salad. There'll be just us because Mamma will be with the other women until the last drum beat and Buster will be bushed up along the creek getting drunk with his friends. So long for now, Ocksheebie."

"Hold on a second," I cut in. "How did you know I had an Assiniboine name?"

"Because I overheard some of your friends call Ocksheebie as they danced by where you sat, and they were teasing you in Assiniboine about killing a steer and about belonging to Act Like Dogs. You see I learned the language of my mother long before I spoke the white man's." There was an edge of bitterness to her voice as she turned and walked away quickly, leaving me standing there.

I made my way to the tent where Luke Deniff was banking his poker game, and squatted behind the players around the blanket. Buster Haggerty was one of them and he had a sizeable pile of poker chips in front of him that showed he'd won a few jackpots. He looked up at me when I came in and gave me a winner's smile. I sat there a while behind Luke, marking time until the stud poker game ended, and it was almost half an hour later before Luke shoved his discarded hand aside to roll a cigarette, giving me a chance to borrow fifteen bucks. Luke winked as he handed me a ten and a five.

"That rotgut that whiskey peddler is sellin' is what the undertakers use for embalmin' fluid. Should be labeled R.I.P." Luke chuckled at his grisly humor.

I was edging my way to the closed flap of the tent when Buster Haggerty looked up sideways from under the brim of his new black Stetson. Buster had the gray-green eyes of his old man, set under heavy black brows. His eyes were bloodshot and his breath stank of bad booze.

"I watched you dance the Circle Dance," Buster spoke in lowered tone. "Watch your step, kid."

I WAS shore glad to get out of that tent reeking with tobacco smoke and the odor of whiskey. Outside in the fresh air, with its clean odor of sagebrush, the first shadows of dusk were creeping in, darkening the sky a deep purple. The ragged outline of the distant Little Rockies were dark shadowed with coming night as I walked slowly toward the tent where Wild Horse Pete Haggerty's only daughter was waiting. I hadn't liked the look in her brother's eyes or the way he'd said, "Watch your step, kid!" Was there a hint of warning in Buster's words? Or was he joshing?

The flap of the tent was open and thrown back. I could see her standing just inside. She had changed into a divided riding skirt of soft leather and a dark green silk blouse and shopmade boots. With the red dust powder scrubbed off, her face was olive skinned with a sprinkling of freckles. She still wore her hair plaited in braids, and I thought she was the prettiest girl I had ever seen, to sum it all up in one long, bug-eyed look as I stood there staring and tongue-tied like a love-sick school kid.

"What did you expect?" She laughed a little. "A calico squaw dress? Come on in and tie the strings on the tent flap." And I did as she told me while she busied herself fixing our supper.

"Here's the fifteen bucks I owe you for the other raffle tickets," I said as I put the folding money on the rawhide covered mess box she was using to carve the ham on. "I borrowed it from Luke Deniff who is running a stud poker game in one of the tents. Your brother Buster was sittin' in. He said he'd seen us dancing together, and for me to watch my step. I didn't like the way he said it or the way he looked at me."

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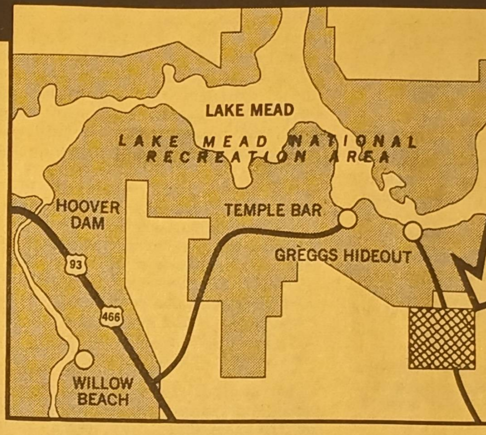

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"That's Buster's idea of a joke." She gave me a sideways glance. "Playin' the big brother. Buster can take a big jump in the frog pond." She picked up the money and shoved the banknotes into a pocket of her divided skirt.

"All the same," she smiled faintly as she went back to her sandwich building, "just to play it safe, we'd better bush up somewhere in a cut coulee." She put the sandwiches in a brown paper bag along with the potato salad, some pickles and two bottles of root beer.

It was getting dark outside and nobody saw when we disappeared into a long coulee and vanished from sight in the high buck brush about a quarter of a mile away from the wall tents. We located a level place covered with tall buffalo grass under a high cutbank and sat down cross-legged to eat.

I reminded her that I didn't know her first name. She said it was Kathleen, Kate for short. She reached over and took a sack of Bull Durham and a book of papers from the pocket of my black sateen shirt. She rolled a neat cigarette, licked the paper edge with the tip of her tongue, and leaned closer to put the cigarette in my mouth. Then she rolled her own smoke, and I lit both cigarettes. Kate Haggerty was the first girl I ever saw smoke, to say nothing of rolling her own, and I put my thoughts into clumsy words and heard the sound of her mocking laugh.

"My daddy taught me to roll a cigarette," Kate explained. "About a year ago when his hand was in a plaster cast because of broken bones I'd roll and light his cigarettes, and that's how come I learned to smoke. Does that shock you, cowboy?" She made it sound like a challenge. And I met it. It took all the nerve I had to reach out and put my arms around her and in that embrace we whispered a lot of everlasting promises to each other to pledge our love.

Then the awareness came to us that the drums had suddenly ceased, that the chanted chorus of the singers had stopped, and the loud voice of the Camp Crier sounded. He announced that the Ten Songs Dance which had just been sung by the singers and danced by the young men now ended that part of the Grass Dance, and for all those who had fasted since early morning it was time to eat. The women had prepared dog stew, to give them strength to finish the remainder of the Grass Dance. The Old Men and the women would now go to their lodges. After the eating was over the young dancers, singers and drummers would proceed with the other half of the Grass Dance.

Kate pushed me away. "It's time for me to take my mother to the lodge of her father Crazy Wolf, to eat and smoke with my grandmother who is said to be a hundred years old. It's my duty to stay with Mamma in Crazy Wolf's lodge until she is ready to go to bed. We'll pull out for home at sunrise. So this is goodbye until we meet again, Ocksheebie."

Thus we parted with a last long embrace and promises to write each other, both blissfully unaware that it was for the last time. We were destined never to meet again.

BEFORE I got my horse and saddled up for the ride back to the Circle C I aimed to pick up my six-shooter and claim the elkhide shirt I'd won by buying all the raffle tickets. But when I walked down the wagon road to the sub-agency store I found the door was fastened by a Yale lock and no lights showed. I sure hated to leave before I got my gun and the shirt, and assuming that one of Healy's boys always slept in the store I walked around the log building to the back door. In recent weeks a log storeroom had been added onto the rear of the store but the daubing between the logs had not yet been added, so that splinters of lantern light showed through the small openings not yet chinked. Inside I heard the murmur of low-toned conspirators' voices, the soft muted strumming of a guitar, and someone singing a ribald song.

It was moonlight and I had no trouble locating the rear door. I hesitated a long moment then rapped on the door with my knuckles. The guitar strumming ceased, the singer broke off in the middle of a word, the light went out, and nary a sound came from inside. Then the door opened inward abruptly and the muzzle of a carbine barrel was shoved hard into my belly. It was by pure instinct that I reached for the stars and stepped back from the dark shadow into the pale light of the moon.

"Who is it?" a harsh whisper sounded.

"It's me!" I called back inanely, in a somewhat unsteady voice that sounded weak and silly, then I quickly identified myself. I said I'd come to get my six-shooter.

"It's all right to let the kid in," a voice I vaguely recognized spoke up. "He'll keep his mouth shut."

The man who let me in was my good friend Charlie Ohlerking, son of a squaw-man whose outfit was located on Big Warm Creek. The prodding thrust of the gun barrel was gone and when I was told to come in, it was more an order than an invitation. The door closed behind me and there was the metallic sound of an iron bolt sliding into place. The lantern was re-lit and the men in the room were all half-breeds I recognized as old friends. Bob Kirkaldie, Charlie Ohlerking, Healy's son, and a few others. The half-breed with the guitar was the only stranger to me. He limped a little as he came toward me holding out a hand and showing white teeth in welcome.

"I'm Charlie Perry," he said as he gripped my hand. And the sound of his name conjured up swiftly the tragic memory of the killing by Perry of a former sub-agent named William Allen in the office at the Circle C Ranch. It had been the climax of a long bitter feud between William Allen and the Circle C outfit, and it was Allen's brother-in-law, Charlie Perry, who had shot Allen down. But that's another story. Perry had pleaded self-defense and had served only a few years in the state penitentiary at Deer Lodge.

This was the first time I had ever laid eyes on the tall handsome Charlie Perry, and we'd no sooner shaken hands when somebody handed me a cupful of whiskey. By that time every man had a tin cup of raw whiskey in his hand, taken from a five-gallon jug set in a frame rocker on the counter.

For me it was a sort of initiation into the circle of the half-breeds living on the Fort Belknap Reservation and as we drank we made a vow of secrecy regarding the forbidden whiskey, unknownst to the sub-agent Healy who was asleep in his cabin across the road from the store.

"The Old Man," his stalwart son announced grimly, "would have us all arrested by the Indian police if he was to get wind of the crock of whiskey, that's for sure. So mum's the word and it's up to everyone here to keep things toned down and under control. Just don't get to hollerin' or raisin' hell. Sing us one of those prison songs, Perry."

"This is a song I learned," Perry said, "while I was makin' horse hair bridles in the pen. It's dedicated to Kid Curry when he was locked up in that Tennessee jailhouse."

You could hear those convicts singing
As they said farewell to me.
And across the barren jail yard
The old turnkeys walked the wall
Beneath the stars on silent guard.
As the moon rose in its glory
I jumped out the second story
Of that prison down
In sunny Tennessee!

The song called for another round of drinks and there followed other songs and drinks. A guard was posted outside, armed with a Winchester .30-30 saddle gun, with orders to shoot to miss if any mounted Indian police skylighted on the ridge above where the ceremonial Grass Dance was going strong.

According to Healy's son, his father would be asleep purposely on his good ear. He was stone deaf in his other ear, so that way he couldn't hear the drums or singers or the war whoops the dancers let out as they leaped high in acrobatic contortions.

I MADE SOME off-hand careless remark about the elkhide shirt. Charlie Perry said Buster had given the raffle tickets to his sister to peddle to white spectators at the dance, but that instead of selling the tickets she'd joined in the Women's Circle Dance so Buster had sold the elkhide shirt to some dude for twenty-five bucks.

I had sense enough and was sober enough to keep my mouth shut about having bought all the raffle tickets from Kate Haggerty—that I'd been suckered out of twenty-five bucks. But I aimed to locate Buster before I pulled out and either get my money back or drag it out of his hide. I asked Charlie Perry if he knew where I could locate Buster and Perry said, "Hell, yes, the Indian police arrested him for having a bottle of whiskey and took him to the daily house at the agency; that Buster would be on ice until Wild Horse Pete bailed him out.

The loss of the elkhide shirt I had set my heart on owning, together with the prospect of being flim-flammed out of more than half a month's wages and the rankling notion that my darling Kate had somehow in some remote manner been in on the deal, made me a little heartsick. For me the Fourth of July fun was over and it was high time I hightailed it.

Charlie Perry unlocked the front door and told me I could leave that way when I was ready to go. He handed me a lighted candle and Charlie Ohlerking and Bob Kirkaldie followed me in to get their guns and head for home. We had a final round of drinks and each of us took a pint to sober up on. I put the lighted candle on the counter in the front of the store while we got our six-shooters from the back shelf where canned goods and bottles were stacked. There was the bold black-lettered sign to mock me: "ELKHIDE SHIRT TO BE RAFFLED OFF. TICKETS ONE DOLLAR."

A few day ago I'd swapped a German Luger automatic to Charlie Ohlerking for a two-year-old, halter broke, roan gelding. When I asked him how he liked the Luger, Charlie said it shot like a rifle, as accurate as a .22 target rifle. He then suggested a shooting match between the three of us—me with my Colt .45, Bob Kirkaldie with a Smith & Wesson .38 Special double action, and Charlie with the Luger. One shot each.

Charlie pointed his gun at the row of tomato cans on the shelf, thumbed back the safety and squeezed the trigger, drilling a neat hole in the center of a tomato can. Bob Kirkaldie fired his .38 slug into the heart of another tomato can, and just to be different I aimed the .45 at a quart bottle of ketchup, smashing the bottle to smithereens. The roar of the three gun blasts was cannon loud, and the three of us went out the front door on the run, banging it behind us. I cut a look over my shoulder as I went out and saw blotches of red ketchup spattered over everything, the store filled with powder smoke.

The long-legged Charlie Ohlerking beat me'n Bob to the feed corral. We must have broken some kind of a record catching our horses and saddling, like Pony Express riders at a relay station. We were long gone, our horses spurred to a run, by the time Charlie Perry and the other breeds had time to gather their whiskey-numbed thoughts together and to discover the red stains on the shelves and floor were ketchup and tomato juice, not from dead men.

It was sort of a dirty, low down trick to play on the rest of the half-breeds in the back room, we decided as we pulled up a mile or so away to take time out to roll a smoke and have a drink. We had seen half a dozen Indian police quirt their ponies down the slant from the Indian dance to the sub-agency store. We heard hoarse shouts of Healy as he shouted from the doorway of his house, yelling for the police and hollering bloody murder.

Charlie Ohlerking, a year or two older than Bob and I, suggested, "Mebbe the three of us had better quit the country for a while, till the dust settles."

It wasn't the first time Charlie had

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gotten into trouble and had hid out. Bob and I agreed it was a good idea on account of Charlie Perry and the Healy boy would squeal on us because we'd left them in a tight. The main thing was that five-gallon jug of whiskey. If the Indian police found that in the storeroom there would be hell to pay.

THE ONLY THING to do, we all agreed, was to quit the reservation and lay low until the dust settled. Bob Kirkaldie would get word to his brother Ed to give the word when the stink died out and it was safe to return without being picked up by the Indian police. As for me, I had three choices. To go back to the ranch. To go with them into the badlands of the Missouri. Or go to the Jim Thornhill place and tell Jim the whole thing. Old Jimmer had gotten me out of a couple-three tights before.

But I chose to go back to the ranch and face the music. After all, Jake Myers had left me in charge of the outfit and it was up to me to be there when he got back from Malta. One thing bothered me and I laid it on the line.

"Who furnished the booze? Who was responsible for that five-gallon keg of whiskey?"

"Nobody knows," Charlie had a lopsided grin on his swarthy face. "And nobody this side of hell is goin' to find out. You were sworn to secrecy when you took your first tin cupful, so mum's the word, feller."

"Don't worry about me squealin'," I promised, and we had a drink to bind the deal before we parted company at the reservation gate. Charlie and Bob were headed for old Tex Alvord's saloon at Rocky Point, thirty-odd miles distant. I had to travel about a mile to the Circle C ranch.

The booze I'd consumed had soured; my Fourth of July celebration had ended in disaster. I thought about Kate Haggerty with mixed feelings of love and a sneaking suspicion that she was in cahoots with her brother Buster on the elkhide shirt deal. And anyway you wanted to look at it, I was in a tight. I dreaded the showdown with Jake when he found out about it, and he was bound to find out about me killing the Rafter T beef steer and shooting up the sub-agency store at Lodge Pole, and about me and the breeds getting drunk. Jake had his own way of finding out things like that, and he'd shore pour it on when the sign was right. Meanwhile I was living on borrowed time all that day until Jake returned to the ranch.

That evening Jake called me into his office with the bookkeeper to check my tally book for the day spent on the reservation checking our cattle. I had no sooner sat down when the telephone rang. It was one of the old-fashioned box telephones with a metal crank and two bells on top, a party line that ran between Malta and the Little Rockies with branch rings at the Phillips Sheep & Cattle Ranch, the Hog Ranch stage station and the Circle C. Whenever Jake talked on the phone he always raised his voice to a tone you could hear a hundred yards away and that's why it was called the Whoop and Holler line.

I kept my fingers crossed while Jake bellowed into the phone, but by the gist of his talk I knew something had gone haywire.

"Yeah, this is Jake Myers. What's that again? Yeah, the kid's here at the ranch. The hell you say? Old Man Healy's fit to be tied? Now ain't that too bad. I said it was too damn bad them drunk fellers didn't gutshoot that sub-agent. You heard me right. If the kid here had anything to do with shootin' up the sub-agency store, I'll see to it that he settles his share of the damages, but you can tell Healy if he tries to have the Circle C permit to run cattle on the reservation cancelled we'll hang his hide on the fence. Why don't you ride over here to the ranch tomorrow, Henry, and we'll have a medicine talk. Hell, I know you got a government job to tend to and nobody's blamin' you, Henry. See you tomorrow, and by the way, mebbe I can talk the kid into sellin' you that bald-faced cowhorse Pigeon you talked about makin' a dicker for. You can decide when you get here." Jake hung up the receiver and turned around slowly to give me the eye.

"WHAT," he asked, measuring each word and spitting it out like a bad taste in his mouth, "have you been up to this time? That was the head stockman from the Fort Belknap Reservation callin' from Zortman. He says Healy claims you and some breeds got drunk and shot up the sub-agency store. A bullet busted his bedroom window, missin' him by inches where he lay crippled in bed. He's sent word to the Indian agent at Fort Belknap about you and them breeds raisin' hell at Lodge Pole, claimin' you all got drunk and you aimed to kill him. He's going to write to the Indian Department at Washington to have them cancel the Circle C permit." Jake was shore on the prod by now like an old bull with a horn drooped.

"I go to Malta for a day," Jake went on, "leave you in charge of the outfit, and what happens? You hightail it for the Injun dances at Lodge Pole instead of getting a range count on our cattle as I told you. Get drunk with some breeds. Shoot up the sub-agency store. Give Healy the chance he's been waitin' for to cancel the Circle C permit. Wait until your father gets the bad news from the Indian Department at Washington." Jake had been walking the floor like a caged grizzly. He pulled up short within reach of the old barroom chair where I'd been sitting like a hoptoad on a log.

"What have you got to say for yourself, anyhow?" he asked.

"Nothin'," I said shaking my head. "Nothing that'll do me any good right now."

"Old Man Healy has told the Injun police to arrest you if they catch you on the reservation, and lock you up in the guardhouse jail, accordin' to Henry. So you got nothin' to say for yourself! Well, you better think up somethin' to say when you come up for trial before Uncle Sam's Supreme Court. That sub-agent at Lodge Pole is out to hang your hide on the reservation fence and you'll need the best lawyers in Montana to keep you outa the federal pen at Leavenworth. This ain't no kangaroo court at Landusky that fines you drinks for the house. You're up against Uncle Sam. So you ain't got nothin' to say for yourself!" Jake snorted with disgust.

I was more scared than I let on, and I could tell by the look on Jake's face that he was worried. Anyway a man wanted to look at it I was in a bad tight. I was doing some fast thinking as I sat there. If Healy preferred charges, I could implicate his own son for having that five-gallon jug of whiskey at the government store at Lodge Pole, if things came to a showdown. If I was sent to the federal pen I'd have someone along to keep me company, if I wanted to turn squealer.

"If the Injun police arrest me before that sub-agent charges me with being drunk and shootin' up his store," I told Jake, "he'd better have a little medicine talk with me. I'll change his mind about preferring charges against me, or cancelling the Circle C permit." I put a grin on my face. "I got a hole card buried, Jake. When the sign is right I'll play it."

Jake narrowed his eyes. "If you got anything to say that will clear you, you better spill it here and now."

I shook my head stubbornly. "You been chawin' me out until you run outa wind, without giving me a chance to put in one word. All I got to tell you is that I spent the Fourth of July at Lodge Pole. I had a few drinks. I fired one shot in the store that smashed a ketchup bottle on the shelf, and I'll bet all I've got to lose I can find that soft-nosed .45 slug buried in the wall. It wasn't a slug from my six-shooter that smashed the bedroom window across the road. It was a steel jacketed .30 caliber bullet from a German Luger automatic. And that's about all I got to say for myself now. But I'll bet a year's wages with you, Jake, I'll never stand trial and the Circle C permit will not be cancelled through any mistake I made."

IT WAS the first time I'd had the guts to talk up for myself to Jake, but I was a little hot under the collar. "I heard you tell that head stockman over the phone that he could buy my Pigeon horse cheap. I paid a month's wages for that cowhorse and when I sell him it will be me that sets the price."

"Don't go off half-cocked, kid," Jake grinned. "I was only tryin' to help you out of a tight. Henry draws a lot of weight on the reservation. He's got a drag with the sub-agent and the agent at the Fort Belknap Agency. I figger he could get any charges Healy made against you dropped. He has his eye on that Pigeon gelding, so set your price and I'll manage to get it. Personally I wouldn't give two bits for that fancy star gazer. All he's good for is a fancy lookin' town horse. Ain't worth a damn as a cowhorse."

I nodded agreement. Jake was absolutely right. Pigeon was a fancy town horse and that was all he was fit for.

"If the boss stockman is so stuck on Pigeon he'll pay a hundred bucks for him, so you can handle the deal, Jake. But I'm not about to give him the time of day when he shows up tomorrow and asks me questions. If it comes to a showdown I'll talk cold turkey to Healy himself."

I was halfway bluffing when I made that last crack. If it ever came to a showdown I had it made to surrender to my old friend Abe Long Knife. I'd go with him to the Lodge Pole sub-agency and have it out with Healy. Use a little blackmail tactics, if need be. It was dirty pool but in a tight like I was in it was every man for himself. Rather than see his own son involved he would drop all charges against me. And that was how I had it made.

It must have showed by the way I'd stood up for my own rights because Jake reached in the pocket of my shirt to borrow my tobacco. A sure sign he was on my side.

Next day when Henry Asher showed up I was right there with Jake. Asher was a tall, good looking man, married to a full-blood Assiniboine girl. He joshed me a little about shooting up the store at Lodge Pole but it was all good-natured. He said the sub-agent had cooled off overnight for some reason he kept to himself—and had dropped all charges against me. He was not writing to Washington as threatened. The stink had died down and the dust settled. The whole thing dropped. So I left Jake with the boss stockman to make the dicker for the Pigeon horse.

I figured it was best to keep quiet about the killing of the Rafter T steer. Those Injun friends of mine would keep it a secret, and I never intended to pick up the cowhide for a rug in my cabin. The steer would probably never be missed and I'd get word to Abe Long Knife just to forget it. What Jake didn't know wouldn't hurt him and I wasn't in the mood for another chawing out.

A few days later Charlie Ohlerking rode up to the ranch. I could tell by the way he grinned that the big half-breed had gotten word that the dust had settled. Charlie wanted to know if I had a box of cartridges to fit the German Luger I'd swapped him. Later he told me that when Healy had found out his son had the five-gallon jug of whiskey in the new storeroom, he had quit hollering his head off. He had given the son unshirted hell and the same with Charlie Perry and the other breeds. He had dumped what was left of the whiskey out on the ground and smashed the crock with an axe. But me'n Charlie Ohlerking and Bob Kirkaldie had shore worn out our welcome at the Lodge Pole sub-agency.

It was sometime in October that I got a letter from Kate Haggerty, announcing her marriage to some fellow in Great Falls. She hoped I wished her happiness and that I'd think kindly of her whenever I wore the elkhide shirt—that she would always remember the good time we'd had together that memorable night on the Fourth of July. She signed the letter, "With all my love, Kate."

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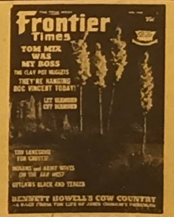

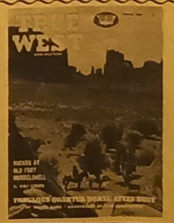

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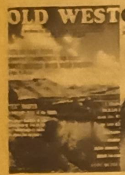

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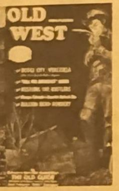

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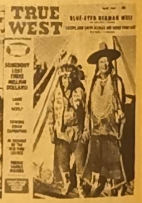

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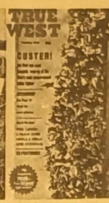

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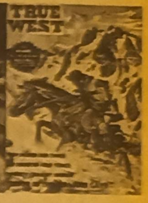
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THE SAGA OF HACKBERRY JOHNSON
70TW-35c

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VINEGAR
71TW-35c

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TALES OF COLORADO
73TW-35c

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TRUE WEST
LOST GOLD of the LAVAS
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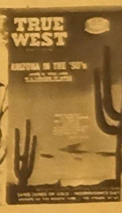

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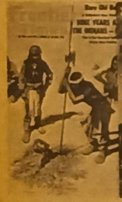
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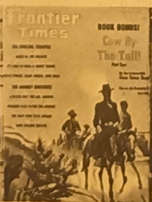
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Cow By The Tail!
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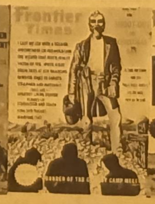
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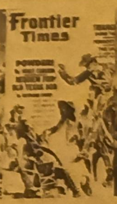
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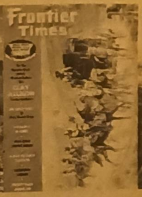
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Frontier Times
WILL ROGERS and CHARLIE
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Frontier Times
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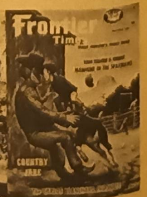
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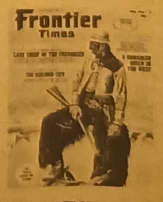
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Neal Coldwell, Texas Ranger

(Continued from page 21)

back with the pack mule. The rangers deployed as they went, but were soon fired on, and a desperate charge was made across the open ground, in which Bingham was killed. His comrades were charging straight ahead, firing rapidly with their Winchesters, and did not notice his fall. The bullets flew so thick along the rim of the ledge that it was death to an outlaw to get his face above it.

THE LEADER, Jesse Evans, kept his head above, and was fired at by Sergeant Sieker who was charging straight toward their position, but his first ball hit the rock in front of him too low. For an instant the outlaw ducked his head and then raised it again, but only to receive a ball between the eyes from the Winchester of the sergeant. The other three became rattled when he fell and ran around under the ledge, keeping their heads below, and almost ran against the muzzle of Tom Carson's gun, who had charged to the brink of the ledge and was looking over, with his gun cocked and finger on the trigger, trying to see them. Before he could fire, they begged for their lives and began to throw down their arms. The other rangers congregated at this point, and Sergeant Sieker ordered them to hand up their guns and pistols and come out from under the ledge.

This all happened in a very short time, and now for the first time it was discovered that Bingham had been killed. The others then wanted to kill the prisoners, but were prevented by the sergeant. The sad duty of burying the dead comrade consumed several hours, as they had nothing to dig with but Bowie knives. The horses of the outlaws were brought up, on which they were mounted, securely tied, and the rangers took their departure, leaving the dead desperado under the ledge where he fell. The trip back to Fort Davis was made without further incident, and the captives put in jail there.

Taking into consideration the disadvantage under which the rangers had to charge across open ground upon a sheltered position of men armed with the best repeating guns and their numbers nearly equal, and the rapidity with which the rangers made themselves masters of the situation, this fight has but few equals in any warfare.

The jail at Fort Davis was of Mexican mode and was a regular dungeon. The main building was square and made of 'dobes, with rooms in the center and doors opening on the outside into the courtyard. The jail was in one corner of the building, and blasted out of solid rock to a proper depth and then covered over by strong timbers securely fastened. The egress was by a trap door. No light was in there. Into this place of utter darkness the captured outlaws were placed.

At this time Captain Coldwell had just arrived, having been sent down there by General Jones to ascertain if any more men were needed at that place. Finding the necessity, General Jones was informed of the fact, and Captain Charles L. Neville and his men were sent. The rangers were quartered at the court and jail enclosure, and some of them stood guard there all of the time.

The citizens of this place and Fort Stockton greatly rejoiced at the changes which had been wrought, and had a great respect and admiration for the Texas Rangers. Before this they were afraid to open their mouths in condemnation of the lawless acts which were constantly being committed in their midst. They were murdered by these desperadoes on the least provocation. The $500 reward which they had offered for the apprehension of the four leaders of this gang they cheerfully paid to the five rangers, or to the four survivors of the desperate battle. Of course, such service as this was expected of rangers without any compensation except their monthly pay, and it was not for any reward that they ran the bandits down and captured them, and they did not expect anything. They accepted the gift in the spirit in which it was given. The donation was from wealthy merchants and stockmen.

AFTER this incident Captain Coldwell was ordered by General Jones to Ysleta to inspect the company of Captain George W. Baylor. At this time Victorio, the famous Mescalero Apache Chief, was in Old Mexico, south of the Rio Grande, with a strong band of desperate warriors. He had been fighting the United States troops in New Mexico and, getting the worst of it, had run down in there for safety. His presence there, being a menace to citizens of Mexico, troops were sent up from Chihuahua by order of the Mexican Government to attack him. Officers of the United States troops in Texas, believing that if driven out of Mexico he would cross the Rio Grande into Texas, had troops scattered through the mountains at all the watering places to intercept him.

Colonel Grierson was in command of these forces, with headquarters at Eagle Springs, forty-five miles east of Fort Quitman on the Rio Grande. On the El Paso stage route a buckboard was run one day, and a "jerky" or two-seated hack, the next. Captain Coldwell went down from Fort Davis on the jerky. The captain only had his revolver, but one of his men put a Winchester in the vehicle, saying he might see Indians on the route. A man named Baker was the driver. They arrived all right at Ysleta.

Several days were spent here attending to business, and then a start was made on the return trip to Fort Davis. At Fort Quitman news was received that the Mexican forces had fought Victorio and his band, making a stand-off affair, and had gone back to Chihuahua, and also that after the fight Victorio had crossed the river and was now in Texas. Captain Coldwell now knew the trip back to Fort Davis would be very dangerous.

Besides himself in the jerky was one Negro soldier, a boy named Graham on his way to Fort Davis to act as hostler there, and the driver. The latter thought the Indians would attack them at Quitman Canyon, but if they passed that place all right they might get safely through. They expected to meet the buckboard at dusk at Eighteen Mile Water Hole, where a short halt was always made to get water. In the evening five men were seen on large horses. At a distance they had the appearance of United States soldiers on account of their mounts. One came toward them a short distance and then went back. The captain now felt somewhat relieved thinking the country was being patrolled by the regular troops. About dusk the water hole was reached, but Baker and his buckboard were not there. This caused some uneasiness, but Captain Coldwell got out and said he would fill a vessel with water and they would continue their journey.

I will here describe the peculiar team which worked to the vehicle. They were small mules, and had been trained to run all the time on the road. When they were harnessed and turned loose from the hitching post they started off at once in a gallop, and could not be stopped easily until they reached the next station. So when Captain Coldwell alighted and was filling his canteen the driver had to let the mules run around in a circle until he was ready to mount again. One startling fact of which the captain and his party were not aware at the time, was that on this very day a battle had been fought with Victorio's band in a few hundred yards of this water hole, in a little canyon just back of it. A squad of the Tenth Cavalry had been routed with the loss of five or six men and horses and they had retreated back to Eagle Springs. The dead horses were lying almost in view off the road, and the men in the valley who had been taken for United States soldiers were scouts of Victorio mounted on United States cavalry horses which they had captured.

It had been agreed by the party in the hack, if the Indians came upon them, that the driver would give his gun to the boy Graham and let the team run in the road. The balance would fight the Indians as they went, unless a mule was killed, and then would stand and fight to the best advantage even with little hope of ever coming clear. If they had known what was ahead, the situation at this time would have seemed more desperate.

The non-appearance of Baker with the buckboard was ominous. After leaving the water hole the mules hauling the jerky went at a lively rate for three miles and then shied at something by the road. It was the buckboard with one mule dead. the other gone, and beside it lay two dead men—the driver Baker and a passenger. They evidently had been killed about sundown, as they should have been at the water hole at the same time the other vehicle was there. No doubt they ran and fought the Indians until one mule was killed, and then died beside the vehicle.

Very little time was taken to look around. The situation was appalling for the captain and his party. Indians were

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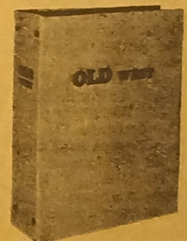

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all over the country, battles were being fought, and men were being killed in various places. The driver was told to slow down his team. The captain sat with his Winchester in his hand, admonished the men to keep cool, have their guns in readiness, and to keep close watch on both sides of the road. They were in for it, and must face the situation and get out of it the best they could. They arrived at Eagle Springs all right and reported the killing of the men in the buckboard. Baker had been warned by the soldiers who had fought the battle near the water hole not to start on his trip; they told him he was certain to be killed there.

For four days Victorio's band swarmed along the road, and finally crossed it at Van Horn's Pass and went in the direction of Rattlesnake Springs. The troops, being informed of the route, went around them and laid an ambush at the springs. Here impatient, restless men spoiled it all, as is the case on so many occasions of ambuscades. Firing commenced too soon, and the Indians turned back and recrossed the Rio Grande at the same place they had in coming over. Victorio was quite a general; he knew the Mexican troops were gone by this time and the coast would be clear on that side.

In the following winter Captain Baylor came down from Ysleta with his men to investigate the killing of one man and the wounding of another in Quitman Pass. At the same time, Captain Neville came down from Fort Davis with his men and the two commands met at Eagle Springs. The combined forces now, after finding the trail of Victorio and his band, again followed in rapid pursuit to the Guadalupe Mountains and here located the camp of the Indians by their smoke and surrounded them.

A fight ensued, but the hostiles soon discovered that it was a considerable force of Texas Rangers that was upon them, and began to scatter and break through the cordon and got away. Six were killed on the ground and many wounded. One wounded squaw was captured and brought back. Some of the United States officers paid the rangers a compliment when they returned by saying they had done more good in ten days than the United States troops had done all summer. Victorio was finally killed and his band scattered.

Captain Coldwell's service on the frontier ended in 1883.

All Kinds of Gunfighters

(Continued from page 23)

ordered the engineer and fireman to walk off into the desert and not look back, but while they were doing this Express Messenger Mitchell, who had been held up near Maricopa only a few months before, quietly emptied the small safe, slipped out of his car, and decamped unseen into the night.

It took the bandits almost two hours to get the main safe open and their unfamiliarity with explosives caused them to place charges which were too large and which did more damage to the express car than the safe. Finally, in an effort to pack down a charge, they weighted it with bags containing a reported $80,000 in Mexican silver *pesos* and touched off a fuse. The explosion burst open the safe, totally wrecked the express car, and scattered the desert with silver coins for a distance of a quarter of a mile in every direction. Many telegraph poles later were found liberally peppered with *pesos.*

The bandits, not wanting to weigh themselves down with the silver, escaped with some $1,500 in paper money. Southern Pacific detectives who arrived on the scene the following day soon learned that several cowboys were missing from their jobs in the area and the local press was told that the robbery was the work of Grant Wheeler, Joe George (real name David Sizer), Jeff Yates and two other men who later turned up and cleared themselves with convincing alibis. It was finally correctly concluded that Bill Traynor was the fourth man in on the robbery.

The gang was seen in the Huachuca Mountains ten days later, and newspapers reported that Grant Wheeler's friends had revealed that "for several years past he has read nothing but train robbery literature" and "was always talking of Jesse James's nerve."

On February 12 detectives investigating the robbery received what they called an "impudent" letter from the gang. It was sent from their new hideout in the Chiricahua Mountains and it dared the lawmen to come in and get them. The letter was signed by Wheeler, George, Traynor and one Dick Davis (which may or may not have been an alias for Jeff Yates). There appeared to be unassailable evidence against the four men, and descriptions were issued.

Traynor was listed as being 35 years old, 5 feet 7 inches tall, with dark, regular features, and a slightly Roman nose. He was called rather handsome and was credited with being "one of the best shots with a pistol in Arizona."

The outlaws were still free when another Southern Pacific train was stopped on February 25, this time at Stein's Pass on the Arizona-New Mexico line. The two robbers involved followed the normal procedure of running the engine up the track from the rest of the train, only to discover that they had carelessly left the express car behind. They did not tarry, but rode away using, said the press, "pretty hard language." Rumors started that it was the Willcox robbery crowd, but Billy Breakenridge—formerly of Tombstone fame in the hell-roaring Earp-Behan days—who was the Southern Pacific detective in charge of the Willcox case, dismissed the second robbery as "the work of very green hands."

The four robbers eventually split up. Traynor headed south and crossed the border. So probably did Dick Davis, who dropped completely from sight. Grant Wheeler and Joe George were seen on the Erie Cattle Company ranges for a few days and then they too parted. Joe George was never definitely heard from again, though an outlaw killed in a later Arizona robbery was hopefully identified as the Willcox bandit. Grant Wheeler headed west and then doubled back on his tracks.

Billy Breakenridge was close behind all the way and when he eventually cornered Wheeler near Mancos, Colorado, the outlaw committed suicide rather than be captured.

TRAYNOR drifted to the mines around Nacozari, Mexico where he knew he'd find both Americans and money. He may have had the money foremost in his mind because the payroll for the Mexican miners was brought down from Arizona each week and the possibility of waylaying the courier had some appeal. It had even been tried once by Mexican bandits, though they did not live long enough to enjoy their loot, thanks to the ministrations of a troop of the Mexican border *Rurales.*

Soon after his arrival in Nacozari a job was offered to Traynor. He had met up with mine superintendents Dan Hughes and Jim Kirk and they took him on as a payroll guard. It was their custom, once the money had arrived at Nacozari, to carry it in money-belts rather than leave it in the old iron safe in the superintendent's office. The payroll usually amounted to $15,000.

Traynor soon showed his mettle when an attempt was made to rob paymasters Hughes and Kirk. Hughes' son Harry left behind a graphic account of the attempted robbery and of Bill Traynor's fighting spirit when he and the paymasters were attacked.

"They were at one of those old Mexican women's shack saloons, pretty well under, trying to entertain themselves with a game of twenty-one, when suddenly the lights were shot out from through the window," Harry Hughes recalled. "Bill was sitting next to me, watching the game, his hands dangling at his sides, always close to his two guns. I heard him grunt. 'God, they got me,' he said. The Old Man and Jim Kirk and myself hit the floor. We all had guns. I yanked mine, cocked it and got ready for the bandits' next move, but from the corner came Bill's voice: 'Let me do the shooting, boys, it's my job. That's what I get paid for. Besides, they got me without giving me a chance. But I ain't hurt bad. Let me plug the s-o-bs.' There was a pause—a pause of deadly silence. We were tense, wondering what was to happen next.

"A crash of glass, and from the window someone said in Spanish, 'Put up your hands and hand over the money, Jim Kirk. We've got you. The house is surrounded. You haven't a chance. We'll kill you all if you don't.' The answer was a roar from Traynor's six-shooter. I distinctly heard the sploshing sound of a bullet that hits soft flesh. There was a gasp, a thud, and I knew Bill had accounted for one of them anyway. Then hell broke loose. From everywhere, lead seemed to rain toward the flash that Bill's gun had made. I knew he was hit again, for he sank to the floor right beside me.

"It was hell all right, in that pitch darkness—breathless moments when one knew not what would happen next, expecting to see a flash, hear the roar, and feel a lead bullet boring through one's body. Who were friends and who were not? We had to take a chance. There must have been ten guns spouting flame and death, judging from the deafening sound.

"Then suddenly someone gave a command and everything was silent. Footsteps—men walking rapidly away. I thought they had escaped, that we were alone, and, fool that I was, I lit a match to see if the Old Man had been hit. Too late I saw a little pock-marked Mexican bring up his gun. The Old Man was within six feet of him. I gasped. He was as good as dead. But Bill Traynor saw too, from where he lay, leaning on his good elbow. The other one was a matted mass of blood. Bill's gun spoke first and the pock-marked man spun. He shot as he fell, but Bill's bullet spoiled the Mexican's aim and saved the Old Man's life. He was hit in the thigh, but it was only a flesh wound. . . .

"In the brief but furious battle that followed, I was knocked over the head, the Old Man was out with a thigh wound, and Jim Kirk had been captured. The bandits got the money. There had been five of them, but Bill had gotten two. Three were left. I came to just as the bandits were leaving with the loot. I reached for my gun but they had taken it. 'Bill,' I whispered, 'Bill, did they get you?' No answer. He had disappeared.

"Wounded as he was, he realized that he had no chance of getting the three single handed, so he used his brains. He crawled out, hurt as he was. I don't see how he did it, for he had three leaden slugs in his body. But he did. He crawled out and hid in the rickety privy that stood to the side of the trail by which the outlaws had to ride to get away. As they passed he got the leader of the three with the very first shot, and he came tumbling down from his horse. The other two started shooting. They made a sieve of that privy, and they made a sieve of Bill Traynor, but he got them.

"He didn't kill them. He wounded both of them and one of the horses. They got away. A posse formed within an hour and tracked the two bandits by the blood they left on their trail. Before morning the two were hanging by the side of the road, stiff and silent, with a placard on their chests, reading: *'Estos eran ladrones'*—'These two were thieves.'

"As I said before, Bill was all man. In about a month he was about again, toting the same guns, hungering for another fight."

IN THE EARLY part of 1897 Traynor grew restless and quit his job with the Nacozari mines. Among the people he had met hiding below the border was "Black Jack" Christian, leader of a band of train robbers, bank and stage holdup men who had terrorized Arizona and New Mexico under the name of "The High Five." Traynor rode north across the border, but failed to find Black Jack and his men. Instead he fell in with Volney Musgrave, younger brother of George Musgrave, chief lieutenant of Black Jack.

Volney, a disagreeable young Texan desperately trying to emulate his brother George, ran a horsethief gang with operations extending from central New Mexico to El Paso, Texas. His herds of stolen stock were constantly on the move southeast from their home pastures to markets in west Texas provided by small ranchers and butchers who asked no questions.

In Socorro County, New Mexico trouble was brewing as rival factions sought control of a valuable stretch of rangeland. A cash sum was put up by one side and it was large enough to induce Volney Musgrave, Bill Traynor and a former cowboy named Sid Moore to hire out their guns for the duration. The troubles concerned Magdalena rancher George Smith on the one hand and his former partner D. C. Kyle on the other. As was often the way in those matters, certain unscrupulous bankers were also involved.

Traynor, while prepared to bully nesters, was apparently not willing to participate in cold-blooded murder. He flatly refused to join Volney Musgrave and Sid Moore when they rode across to George Smith's ranch at Horse Spring on April 4, 1897 and fired four shots into the rancher as he stood on his veranda. Frank Melville, the ranch cook, who was also shot and left for dead, survived to identify the assassins.

The killers headed south and west, crossing the Arizona line and joining Traynor, Black Jack Christian, his brother Bob Christian (who passed under the alias of Tom Anderson), and George Musgrave at the gang's hideout in a cave on Cole Creek near Clifton. The men were together for only a few days. The Musgrave brothers and Bob Christian rode away to scout for a likely-looking bank and were lucky to be absent, for trouble was in the air. Black Jack had unknowingly been betrayed to the law by a disgruntled former gang member and a posse was assembling.

On the morning of April 28, as Black Jack, Traynor and Moore rode down the canyon to take breakfast at the ranch of a friendly goatman named Torunner, they were fired upon by members of Deputy United States Marshal Fred Higgins' posse, who had lain in wait for them since the early hours. Black Jack, in the lead, was mortally wounded. His two companions got away in the confusion, collected some of his gear from their cave hideout and then headed for Sulphur Spring Valley where they rejoined George Musgrave and the dead outlaw's brother. Following a time-worn tradition they hired out as cowboys and kept an eye and an ear open for news of pursuing lawmen. As luck would have it there was none.

BILL TRAYNOR soon separated from George Musgrave and Bob Christian—who went on their way and executed a very successful train holdup at Grants, New Mexico in the fall—and spent the rest of the year cowboying in southeast Arizona. He was still at it in February 1898 when the *U.S.S. Maine* blew up, or was blown up, in the harbor at Havana,

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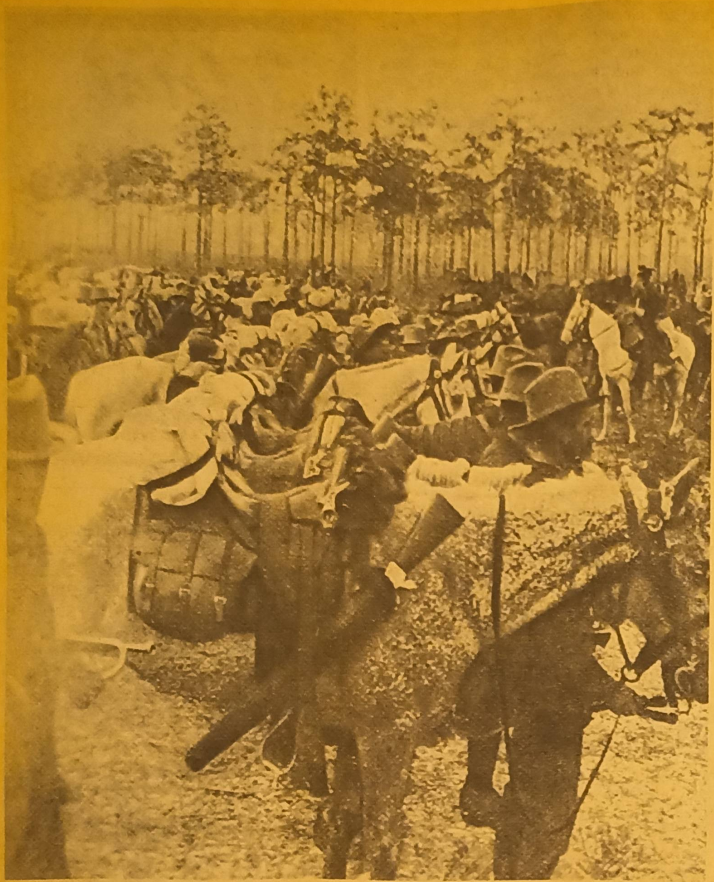

Courtesy Arizona Department of Library and Archives

Traynor's own Company H, Arizona contingent to the Rough Riders, just after their arrival in Tampa, Florida.

Cuba, which led the United States to declare war on Spain. There was a rush among the cowboys of the Southwest to enlist in the First United States Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, which became known as the Rough Riders. On June 4, after traveling eastward via San Antonio, Texas with the rest of the "Arizona Contingent," Bill Traynor was formally enlisted at Tampa, Florida and soon sailed for the Caribbean.

"He went to Cuba with the Rough Riders," James Emmit McCauley reported later, "was a good soldier, so the boys said who went with him, as he was in every battle that the Rough Rider regiment took a hand in and was always in the front."

By early fall the boys were back from Cuba as national heroes. Private William S. Traynor mustered out at Camp Wikoff, Long Island, New York on September 15 and with the rest of the men of H Company, First United States Volunteers, headed for home.

Traynor certainly knew Burt Alvord, a tricky Arizona peace officer who was holding down the post of constable of Willcox by the summer of 1899, but it seems unlikely that they were more than acquaintances. Alvord and his equally unsavory deputy, Billy Stiles, joined by their friend Bill Downing, were headed for lawlessness and it seems that Bill Traynor had decided to try to go straight. He must have known that his luck could not last forever, and his visit to the eastern seaboard had convinced him that the West he had known was changing fast with the approach of a new century.

"He entered the service of the Arizona Cattlemen's Association as an undercover man," Lorenzo Walters said. "His knowledge of cattle rustler habits, and the identities of many of them, enabled him to deliver the goods to those higher up and the ranks of the rustler element were being thinned out to a noticeable extent."

Among those with whom he clashed was Bill Downing, whoremonger and procurer, a dangerous killer who boasted without a grain of truth that he was Frank Jackson, sole survivor of the old Sam Bass gang of Texas fame. Traynor accused Downing, who ran a ranch not far from Willcox, of altering brands. Downing had learned of Traynor's undercover role with the Cattlemen's Association.

"Traynor and Downing met one day in Willcox, bitter words and lurid threats passed between them," Walters reported. "Downing accused Traynor of being a snitcher and they parted on the understanding that there would be a six-shooter broadcasting upon the occasion of their next meeting."

When it happened, most of those present believed that it was setup by Downing and was purely murder. Witnesses differed as to whether Downing was already in Tom Fulghum's Saloon on Marley Street that afternoon in May 1899 or whether he saw Traynor enter and followed him in. Either way, the result was the same. Certainly Downing had friends present who were ready to see that he had the best of the fight.

"TRAYNOR went into a saloon where there was a dance hall and the bar was in the back and partitioned off from the gambling and dance hall," McCauley said. "Some way Downing followed him, and as Traynor raised his glass to drink, Downing began to fire on him. He emptied his six-shooter into Traynor and he sunk to the floor a dead man."

The way that Walters got the story, Downing was already in the saloon when Traynor and Al Wein walked in.

"As they lined up to the bar, Traynor saw Downing's reflection in the mirror and turned to face him but Downing, who had already drawn his six-shooter as Traynor entered the saloon, shot him dead. Traynor did not have any show at all. Inasmuch as Downing had plenty of friends to testify that Traynor had threatened to kill him the first time they met, he was exonerated on the grounds of self-defense."

Downing also had men in the saloon to back him in case of trouble and to prevent any of Traynor's friends from getting into the fight.

"Bill [was] murdered in cold blood in Willcox—and I was unable to help him," Harry Hughes said sadly. "I had a gun stuck in my back."

The killer went free for some time, joined Burt Alvord in planning a robbery of the Southern Pacific Railroad at Cochise Junction the following September, and escaped detection. It was only after a bungled holdup at Fairbank in February 1900 that Alvord's, Stiles's and Downing's complicity in the successful and unsuccessful robberies came to light. Downing served a prison sentence in the Territorial Prison at Yuma and was still in jail when the corrective institution was moved to Florence. He was pardoned out in 1907, worked briefly in Mexico and then returned to Willcox where he resumed his management of the red-light girls. He had trouble with Arizona Ranger Billy Speed and when the two clashed in a gunfight on August 5, 1908, the lawman beat the outlaw to the draw and killed him.

Bill Traynor, dead for nine years, was avenged.

How the JJ Ranch Was Run

(Continued from page 31)

corral, it was a sisal rope about an inch and a half in diameter. The size of corral, usually about 50 feet wide by 100 feet long. Two stakes were driven at each of the four corners for guy ropes and a pole stood at each corner about three inches in diameter and about seven feet long for height. The large rope was tied to these four poles in the corners and guyed to the corner stakes. One end was let down to drive the herd in and then erected again. The rope swayed in the center about two feet from the ground. A horse could easily step over or jump over. But they were educated to stay put. When a horse attempted to get away he would be immediately roped and thrown. The educating was done with a whip. The one making the catch would stand on the horse's head so he couldn't get up and whip him until he cried out in pain. He was then let up and each one couldn't get into the corral fast enough, never to jump out or leave again that way.

The horses would line up around the outer sides, heads out, tails in, with a he-he snort and nicker. They would soon settle down and expect to be caught for the mount. Believe it or not, each horse sensed when his turn would come and stood shivering waiting for the rope to fall. Mr. Higgins always roped out the boys' mounts for them. He said he didn't want a bunch of scared horses with rope burns from a miss so he did the work himself. For that reason the boys nicknamed him Grandma Higgins. But a fellow had better not call him that to his face.

He could throw a loop the easiest and lightest of anyone I ever saw. He did not twirl it around his head but would lay the loop out behind him on the ground and his cast was just like the floating of a butterfly. His horses did not thread down the line to escape a badly thrown rope, but would stand with head up awaiting the rope. A beautiful sight at the gray of dawn was to see a bunch of horses in a rope corral and see the roping out of the mounts, and at times some of the broncs would give a boy a tough time for a while. If they did get thrown it would always be their luck to land in a prickly pear cluster. I still have some pictures of boys pulling prickly pear spines out of their shirts while a buddy picked them from their backs. The boys all said they preferred to land on their heads when thrown so they would not sprain their ankles. That one drop of Irish or Norse blood works wonders that way.

I HAD WORKED for six hours in the corral filling syringes. Slim Davidson did the dehorning, Pulo Padea helped set them on the horns, John and Kit Carson did the branding and Dr. Watleigh the vaccination. All three operations went on at the same time. You can see how much time it saved to have a squeezing chute. Four out of five steers had skipped past the boys and were running around in the small corral. Their curiosity would get the better of them and they would inch up close to the pan where I was filling syringes. All I had to do to get rid of them was to jump at them and yell boo and they would run to the far end for a while.

Mr. Wilson, the range boss, came into the corral about noon. They called him Beany. He constantly chewed tobacco and juice would run out of the corners of his mouth. He kept it mopped up with a double twist with the back of his hand and then on his trousers. Cowboys in Colorado at that time wore their boots under the trouser legs.

As Beany came in he said, "You are a sloppy bunch of hands. Why did you let these calves get into this corral?" A happy thought struck me that if Slim Davidson would cut only one horn off and leave the other one on we could have some fun. The first cross between the Hereford and the longhorn produces an animal with lanky body, white face and sharp horns about fourteen to eighteen inches long and when excited they will attack anything near that moves. Beany had started toward the new fence at the dipping vat and was going to see and inspect the operation. Knowing this I held up one hand to my head with finger pointing up and with the other hand made a motion as shearing one horn from my head then pointed to Beany who was about ten feet from the chute and headed away from it.

Slim caught the cue and only cut one horn off, leaving the blood to stream down into the animal's eye. Kit stuck the hot iron enough to burn good and the boys turned the steer loose and urged him toward Beany. Beany heard the steer coming and started to run for the fence. He had about fifty feet to go but I have never seen a fat man run as fast as he did. He barely made the fence and as he started up, the steer caught one of his pants legs on that horn and up with his head. Lucky for Beany that the horn tore out about the hip pocket, ripping that britches leg and scratching the flesh to bring the blood. He turned as white as could be and I know he must have swallowed his cud of tobacco.

No one let on. We all wanted to laugh but couldn't. But later we all had a big laugh about it. After that when Beany would be around one boy would say to the other, "Why you boys lettin' these calves slip by in this corral?"

Beany would growl, "You go to hell." Some jokes were rather serious at times.

Several of the steers had broken off a horn. Flies had blown the cavity and maggots were working lustily. We had a silver spoon that we used to scoop out the mess and swab it good with a grease and carbolic mixture. It looked just like rice pudding, yellow and nice like it had plenty of egg-yolk in the custard. After scooping one out Slim Davidson said to me, "Andy, let's have some fun. You go over to the White House and get some milk and eggs from the rustler. Tell him the cook wants to make a rice pudding. Then when we eat at noon you always get through first so you can make a big to-do about the good maggot pudding dessert and dip up some and start to eat it. And see what happens."

Well, it happened. Two of the men

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threw up and one threw a hot cup of coffee at me. I saw what was coming and jumped on my pony and struck out. Some of the fellows never did forgive us for that stunt.

Another one was pulled by the boys on an Englishman who wanted to ride in a cow outfit just for the romance of the thing. The boys got a piece of rope and soaked it in water and rubbed soupy clay all over it. That night they told about the large rattlesnakes that were in that particular spot and how one of the boys last year barely escaped being bitten. This rattler had come in the night and crawled over the fellow's neck. He woke up but dared not move or call for fear the snake would bite him. He lay and sweated in agony for an hour until the snake crawled off.

That night after the Englishman had gone to sleep they took the rope and tied a long string to it and laid it across the Englishman's neck. The fellow pulling the rope took about fifteen minutes to pull the thing free. Two of the boys came in and told the Englishman to lie perfectly still and not move. They could do nothing for fear the snake would bite him. When the rope was dragged free the boys stomped it and took it outside. The Englishman was so shaken from the ordeal that he was quite weak. The boys had a quart of liquor and he kept drinking until he was drunk. They had to put him in the chuckwagon and haul him for that day's move until he sobered up. If he had known that the boys played a joke on him he would have killed one or more of them. He was quite a man and afterwards won his spurs with flying colors.

FRED GANZ was a German about twenty-five years old and had been in the German Army. He told me he had gotten a vacation and was taking an extension course in a German university in Berlin. The thing I suspected was that he was a part of the wide-flung German intelligence system set up prior to the war to catalog all our industries and be able to place men at their head so business would go on as usual. He was bright as a tack and could talk intelligently on any subject which might come up.

Just before war was declared he got a registered letter from Germany and left suddenly. Said his people in Germany were having difficulty and he must go home at once. He was a big-boned man six-feet-three-inches tall. Muscular, very little fat, and weighed about 230 pounds. He always wanted me to take him coyote hunting, "Tage me vid you hoonting. Ich vill kil ein coyote." So at last I asked Frank if I could take Fritz coyote hunting and he agreed it would be all right.

I picked out an old bronc about sixteen hands high and weighing about 1,200 pounds. Rigged up with a saddle and let the stirrups out to fit and got Fritz aboard. We went up Smith Canyon to a place where there was a natural crossover from Jack Canyon and a likely place at least to see a coyote. We had traveled about ten miles from the ranch and were going up a mesa side along a well-worn trail when I saw a slender tin can beside the trail. A happy thought struck me and I said, "Oh Fritz, look over on that other ridge. Do you see that coyote?"

His attention was fully drawn to the spot and he said, "Ver, ver?"

I leaned from my pony and picked up the can and with a touch of my spur the pony wheeled back of Fritz's horse. I raised its tail and stuck the tin can under; the old bronc clamped his tail down on the can and started to buck and bawl, waugh-waugh. Fritz grabbed the saddlehorn and stayed on but his head nearly popped off his body from the bucking ride. He was a good sport and laughed but said, "I vil gedt effen vid you fur dis, you see."

Well he did. About a week later I had to take a letter to the train at La Junta for the boss. There was no auto at the ranch so I had to ride the twenty miles on my pony. The next day I stayed in town too long and didn't get back to the ranch until after dark. As I rode past the blacksmith shop the door flew open and an empty lard can was thrown under my pony. For a few minutes I did not know which way was straight up or sideways. At any rate I did not get thrown.

A voice boomed out, "Anty, I tole yew I vud gid effen vid yew, ha, ha." Fritz had scored his revenge.

How the JJ Ranch Began

(Continued from page 26)

they loaded 2,000 cattle at Granada, Colorado for shipment to the Kansas City market. These cattle filled ninety-eight railroad cars.

In the history of the JJ Ranch a dissenting voice comes from the men who were the small farmers of seventy, eighty, ninety and now almost one hundred years ago. The farmers and cattlemen represented two factions whose interests did not match. The farmer usually had a few cattle which he wanted to pasture on neighboring land but was unable to do so because the JJ claimed everything in sight. There was constant friction between JJ riders and the herder of the farmer's stock. In old JJ territory today that grudge still smoulders.

All early homesteaders had to take turns guarding their fields and crops. Many were waving bedsheets and shooting off their shotguns at all hours of the day and night trying to stampede JJ cattle away from tilled land and gardens.

JAMES AND PEYTON Jones had their nephew Bud, son of Steve Jones, with them on the roundup in August 1875. Bud found a calf which seemed to have been missed by the other riders. He promptly applied the company brand to its hide. After a few days James Schell, a man of small holdings in cattle, noticed what had happened to his calf. He immediately went to the JJ wagons to claim his property. He explained how he was sure the calf was his. He was familiar with the markings and the mother of the calf knew her young. But Bud would not give up the calf. He claimed he had branded only what calves belonged to the JJ.

James Schell went home without the calf when there was nothing else for him to do. He came back the next day but his arguments were of no avail. After that there were several meetings and the feeling between the two men became quite bitter. At last Bud Jones shot and killed James Schell. The little rancher had many friends who took his part. Jones was arrested. Bail was posted and he was released pending trial date. Newspapers of the day followed the case and when it came to trial and they reported that Bud Jones was acquitted, friends of the murdered man shook their heads. In spite of the court's decision they insisted that a wrong had been done their neighbor. They predicted that just punishment would come to Bud Jones some day, in some way.

After his acquittal Bud became very arrogant. He seemed not to fear men, courts or even the "Man upstairs." At that time he was only nineteen years old. In the fall of 1878 Bud was in camp on the range and according to cowboy custom he made his bed on the ground. One night in September a skunk suffering from rabies wandered into camp and bit him on the lip. Bud did not worry about it as skunks, snakes and other small varmints were always around a cowboy's camp.

Early in November he bought a ticket for Texas. On the way he became ill and had to be taken from the coach. He died in a short time calling loudly the name of James Schell. Bud was buried in Odessa, Texas.

In 1880 W. R. Green, junior member of the firm of Underwood, Clarke and Company (Land and Stock Brokers of Kansas City), came to Bent County to negotiate with the Jones brothers for the purchase of their ranch. He spent the summer on the range with the men taking inventory and making note of conditions as he found them. He represented British capital and was preparing to make an extensive report to his prospective investors.

It was not until 1881 that the Jones brothers consented to sell. The price agreed upon was $625,000. This covered land, cattle and equipment. Green made a down payment of $25,000 and the balance was to be paid through a certain bank. In a short time the Jones brothers realized that they had sold too cheap. They had made a serious blunder, but the bargain had been made binding by the down payment. They tried to have the sale called off and continued their efforts until the date of payment of the remaining $600,000 was due. They hoped that there might be failure on the part of the purchasers to make good.

On the appointed day the Jones brothers presented their papers at the bank and the banker pushed a large sack through the window to them. It contained the $600,000 in cash. With that transaction their ranch was gone.

It is not commonly known how many cattle were involved in the sale but one writer states there were 55,000 head. In the last year of operation before the sale the Jones brothers had branded 11,000 calves. The new owners, the Prairie Cattle Company of Edinburgh, Scotland, sold enough cattle in two years to pay for the herd and they had so many cattle left that the ones they sold were not missed. It was under their management when most of the things happened that are remembered about the JJ.

BILL THOMPSON, the regulator for the JJ, shot the town of Old Boston off the map. Later Thompson himself was shot and killed at the JJ Ranch, and is buried in the old Higbee cemetery on JJ land. The Doss kid, or Kid Doss, the cowboy responsible for Thompson's death, was also killed by another cowboy from the 101 Ranch on the Cimarron near Kenton, Oklahoma. Anyone not being able to take care of himself had no business in this part of the country at that time.

Any cowboy or cattleman who lived in this area from 1870 to 1917 either worked for the JJ at some time or ate JJ beef. Generally a JJ steer was closer to them than one of their own.

Richard "Dick" Head was the first manager and he lasted two years. He was followed by W. J. Tod for another two-year hitch. In 1887 Murdo McKenzie who had served as the ranch secretary under Tod took over as manager for the next six years. He left the JJ to go with the Matador Land and Cattle Company in Texas.

J. C. Johnson replaced McKenzie and ramrodded the spread for fourteen years. In 1904 Howard Glazbrook took the reins and rode in the driver's seat until the JJ was dissolved in 1917. Perhaps I should say until the Prairie Cattle Company was dissolved, because they operated three large ranches at that time. The JJ in Colorado and the LIT and the Cross L in New Mexico and Texas. Thus for forty-eight years, from 1869 to 1917, the JJ was a factor in this area.

So much of its history happened many miles from the headquarters and the "glory" or "gory" of it went to other ranches and/or towns. I am thinking of the shooting of a JJ cowboy in the then-tough town of Carrizo Springs, Colorado. Harry Teal was his name, and he was not classed as a thoroughly bad character although he was considered generally worthless. He stole from the boys whatever attracted his attention but was likely to give it to someone else the next day. The value of a thing meant nothing to him; he stole because he couldn't seem to resist the temptation.

His buddies made it a habit to inspect his pack at regular intervals and reclaim their lost articles. Harry never seemed to take offense and, actually, most of the boys liked him. The moment he became drunk, however, he tried to be tough. It was on such an occasion that he was killed, killed trying to stage a bluff. He had spent the night in Carrizo Springs, almost 100 miles south of JJ headquarters but was still on JJ range. He got stinking drunk and stayed that way all night. The next morning, accompanied by Doc and Mrs. Ruggles and the Swank girls, Clara and Swade, Harry started to enter a cafe for some breakfast. Mrs. Robertson, who owned the cafe, objected to their presence and sent her son, Dick, to persuade them not to come inside. Still drunk, Teal paid no attention to the request but swaggered to a table, threw down his revolver and with the usual amount of foul language demanded something to eat, saying that he had the money to pay for it.

Dick made some remark about going to the kitchen for some chuck but came back with a shotgun instead. He fired directly at Teal, blowing off the top of his head at the first shot. Teal fell forward on his face—another victim of his own bluffing. Dick Robertson did not stay and face trial, although he was urged to do so by his friends who thought he would not be convicted for protecting his own place of business. Teal became one of six to be buried at Carrizo Springs as his body was not returned to the JJ headquarters.

The old Penitente Church (built in the shape of a cross) used to have armed guards to keep outsiders away from their ceremonies. The JJ cowboys would ride up on the rimrock above the church, and with a spy glass would watch the "goings on" as they called them.

The old fireplace of the White House, which burned, and two of the adobe bunkhouses are all the buildings left at the headquarters location of the "Empire of Grasslands" as the JJ was often called. The bits of fine china which can still be picked up remind one of the elegance of the table settings that greeted many a visitor fortunate enough to be invited to stick his boots under the table at the old JJ Ranch.

Deadwood's Lady of Cards

(Continued from page 33)

"Alice—" he dropped his eyes, twisting his hat again.

"What's the matter, Jack?"

"Frank—well, there's been an accident. They sent me to tell you before they bring him home."

She reached a hand to the doorjamb to support herself. Frank was hurt! Badly? No, not that.

"Alice—he's dead."

The shock of it numbed her. She stood ramrod straight. She could feel nothing. Then the enormity of the fact swept over her and she crumbled.

"Here, Alice, sit here in this rocker. It was a blast, Alice, he didn't know. He couldn't know what hit him, he was killed instantly."

The words filtered through her mind. She knew she was seated in the old rocker. She knew that Jack had gone, that soon men would bring Frank home, dead. The knowledge lay like a great weight on her heart.

They had been so content in their short time of marriage. When Frank Duffield, young mining engineer from the West, had courted young and beautiful Alice Ivers fresh out of a southern seminary, their love had swept them into marriage and the long trek from her home. She had been born in Sudburg, Devonshire, England on February 17, 1853 and had come as a child with her parents to the States. Of course she would go with Frank to his job in Colorado! Why

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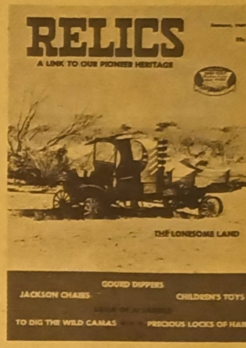

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shouldn't she? She was his wife, and his job was mining in Leadville.

WITH HIS death, life was to change. When the first fresh rush of grief was past, when Frank had been buried and the cabin was empty without him, Alice faced herself and her future. She could not make the long trip back to her parents' home—she had little money and no means of transportation. She must earn money some way. But where, in a small mining community? What could she do that would bring in means of support? What did the town offer besides one or two stores and the saloons and bars?

There was a possibility. Frank and his friends had taught her how to play poker as a diversion in the isolated mountain town. She had been phenomenally lucky at the game. With a streak of the gambler in her soul, she took what little money she had and bet it in a poker game. She won, and she played again. Alice was lucky and she had an impassive face. Before long, she was sure she could make a living just playing cards.

In the gaming rooms she soon became acquainted with Warren G. Tubbs. He was a gambler, too, and as often as not they found themselves pitted against each other. Tubbs was so impressed with her slim figure, her youthful beauty, her fastidiousness of dress, that he didn't care especially when she beat him time after time. He was a house painter during the day; he could afford to let some of his earnings slip through his fingers at night.

"Alice, have dinner with me tonight?"

"Why not, Tubbs?" She flashed a smile at him.

"Alice, you're beautiful."

"Don't be foolish."

"Alice, I love you. Marry me!"

Why not marry Tubbs? He was good to her. This was frontier country. It was hard to live alone. A husband could make life easier, pleasanter. Frank had been her first love, but Tubbs was a decent sort.

"Why not, Tubbs?"

So they married. It seemed odd to Alice, to whom the lucky cards gravitated like steel filings to a magnet, that Tubbs, professing to be a gambler, should have to work during the day to make enough money to support his gambling career. At last she spoke to him about it.

"Look here, you're no card player. Let me do the gambling for the family, and we'll be rich."

Tubbs laughed at her but he did not protest, and Alice resigned from her life as a housewife to resume her gambling career. She enjoyed the games. They were excitement, fun, a dash of suspense and disaster. One evening she and Tubbs went to Silver City, New Mexico and joined a game of faro. Pile by pile she raked in the chips and at last with a gesture of despair the dealer threw down his cards.

"That's all. You broke the bank, lady."

Alice laughed and took the dealer's place behind the faro board.

"No, the evening isn't over, folks. The bank is open again, and the limit's off. Come on, all of you!"

Tubbs was watching her. One by one, the crowd in the room drifted to her table—a woman dealing faro! She was winning, an enticement to all, a challenge to every man to put his money on the board. She was glorying in her position. The men clustered around her table with a hush of expectancy as they waited for the turn of the cards. Alice's luck stayed with her, and she tucked $6,000 in her purse that night before she left the house.

AFTER THAT evening, Alice knew that gambling was in her blood. She could deal and she would. Her slim beauty was an attraction in itself, and the novelty of a skillful woman dealer was money in the bank. She could deal anywhere in town for $25 a night. The opportunity was too good to ignore.

"Tubbs," she said, "I'm going to New York."

"What for, honey? You're doing all right here."

"I need clothes, lots of them. And I want to go on a spree."

"Well-l-l, I don't know as I ought to leave just now."

"I can go alone, Tubbs. I know my way around."

"Yes, I guess you do. You could take the stage, then the railroad." He hated to see her go, but she was the one who had the gift of gold in her fingers. She was the one who raked in the chips. He was hardly in a position to deny her anything. "Don't stay too long, honey."

New York was gala. New York was dress shops and theaters and people. She spent money lavishly and turned back to Tubbs and the Southwest when her trunks were full of clothes and her purse empty. Then she started her career in earnest. She was a dealer in faro and in demand every place she chose to go. The couple followed the gold rushes from camp to camp, knowing that money lay in new camps flush with success. Alice gathered her chips, pile after pile, and spent the money on a beautiful wardrobe.

When the 1876 Black Hills gold rush began in Dakota Territory it was only logical that Alice and her husband would join the flow of humanity toward Deadwood. Again, her young beauty and her gowns attracted men toward her table. She was a sensation, the glamorous dealer of Deadwood's saloons. She knew the men of the town and they knew her. If they must lose, then it was better to lose to Poker Alice, because they gained at least the pleasure of her warm smile and the easy friendship that she offered them.

Tubbs played, too, in spite of the fact that Alice bemoaned his many losses. They argued mildly, but he occasionally won, and between them they banked money night after night. Alice's marriage had progressed from a casual thing to a deep-rooted way of life.

One night Tubbs was playing poker and evidently winning, because his opponents were scowling. As Alice dealt at her faro table she glanced occasionally in his direction. Suddenly one of the men at his table rose quietly and circled back of Tubbs. Momentarily stunned with horror, Alice saw him raise his sharp knife from his belt and stand poised above her husband. Instinct pulled her .38 gun from the holster where she always carried it—a matter of habit on the frontier—instinct raised the gun toward the killer's hand, and Alice herself in a sudden potent fury pulled the trigger.

The knife clattered to the floor and the gambler was doubled in pain, holding his hand, cringing against the wall. For an instant the room was pandemonium. Alice's gun was still gripped in her hand and her hatred for the man was plain to behold when Tubbs turned from his table to absorb the situation. He raised his eyes to Alice's, grinned at her in camaraderie, and waggled his fingers in a kind of salute.

The tenseness in Alice melted, and she felt the change in her emotions with a sense of release. The old goat!—she thought, but the words were a caress in her mind. She tucked her gun back in her holster and picked up the cards.

"Got your bets placed, gentlemen?" she asked, and the game continued.

There was no doubt about it, Poker Alice was Faro Queen of Deadwood. Her slim elegance, her aristocratic young face, her beautiful clothes added to her prestige as a hard-to-beat dealer. She knew her game.

"Hi, Bill. Playing tonight? How's your luck, Harry? Bets all placed?" The games were going again and Poker Alice was winning.

When she had money, she went to New York and spent it freely. When it was gone she came back to Deadwood and made more over the gaming tables. Mixed with the money and the cards, one by one she and Tubbs gave birth to a family, four boys and three girls. That was her life—an odd conglomeration of domesticity and the glitter of a frontier saloon.

THE YEARS PASSED, and with them Alice's patrician beauty faded into middle age. One day she realized that the game had grown dull, that life had become routine. Even clothes were uninteresting. Listlessly she took a dress from her full closet, then pushed it back on its hanger. An old shirt and skirt were good enough. She didn't care, really.

During the years she had coarsened. The long association with the saloons and frontiersmen had done something to her. She had smoked for a long time. The men smoked, and so did she. She reached for a cigar. Tobacco had become a habit, and she didn't care about that either. She was tired, and the tiredness stayed with her, nagging with an uneasy undercurrent.

Dressing wasn't worth the effort. Gradually she assumed the khaki skirt, the man's shirt, and an old campaign hat as a sort of uniform. The cigars became a part of her, she was seldom without one. One day she knew that she was old. Her beauty was gone, she was an old woman, and the fever of gambling was not enough. But Tubbs was there. She always had Tubbs.

"I'm going to quit, Tubbs."

Her husband gave her an easy agreement. Even he could see that his Poker Alice was through.

"I'm going to settle down and raise the family and never deal another deck of cards."

"There's a little place near Sturgis, sugar." He stuck his hands in his pockets and gazed idly at the ceiling. Alice needed a corner of her own. She was obviously tired.

The little place became a rendezvous for their friends, coming and going. There were some who shrugged their shoulders, looking at Poker Alice's place, and said that all weren't friends who frequented it. Perhaps they were right. It didn't particularly matter. Tubbs died in 1910, and she had the responsibility of the children on her own shoulders.

The weary years were upon her, and they dragged slowly by. Sometimes she had enough money, sometimes she did not. The family managed to eat and to be dressed.

Then Alice married an admirer of hers. George Huckert, and for a while things were easier. But George Huckert, too, died, and Alice was once more a widow. This marriage had been so brief that she began to call herself Alice Tubbs again. Everybody knew her as Poker Alice Tubbs, and it was foolish to confuse them by insisting on the name of Alice Huckert.

She took part in Deadwood's "Days of '76" celebrations by dealing faro as an attraction, then was a dealer at the Diamond Jubilee in Omaha, but these were just rare occasions.

In her later years Alice opened a "house of entertainment" at her Sturgis home. Fort Meade, a military post, was nearby with its hordes of soldiers. Some reports implied she did a little bootlegging; others that she conducted a house of prostitution. They were both right. One night the soldiers had a brawl in her house in which Alice came to the defense of her property and shot one of them dead. A couple of others were wounded during the fracas. Alice was arrested, but acquitted on the grounds of justifiable homicide, clearly a case of self-defense. She closed her resort when prohibition came, but could never entirely adjust herself to the ban on liquor.

For a long time there had been a pain inside her body that ate at her vitality. She stood it for as long as she could, and at last went to a hospital. Doctors in Rapid City, not far from Sturgis, told her there was a chance of recovery if they operated, but at her age the risk was great. She was seventy-seven years old.

Alice snorted at the doctor. Risk, indeed! She had lived by chance. "Go ahead, doctor," she said.

The doctors operated, but it was too late. She had had the illness too long, and she was too tired. Three weeks after the operation, February 27, 1930, Poker Alice died in a Rapid City hospital on the edge of the Black Hills of South Dakota. She was buried in the Sturgis Catholic Cemetery. The life of the West's glamorous lady of cards was finished.

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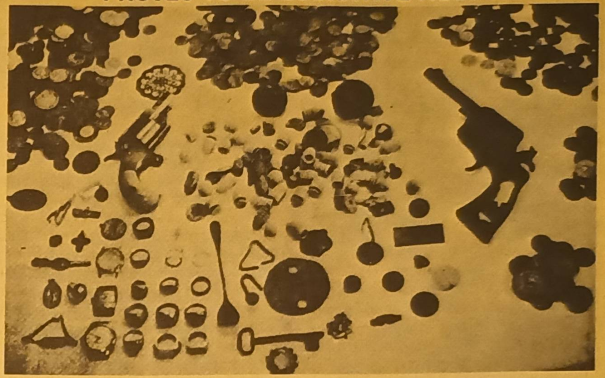

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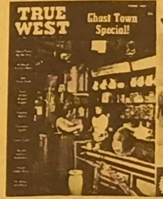

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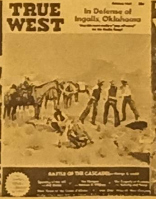

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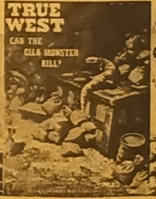

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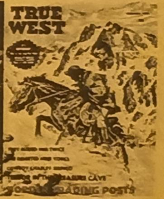

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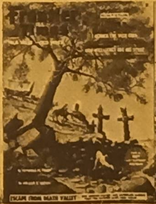

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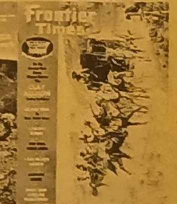

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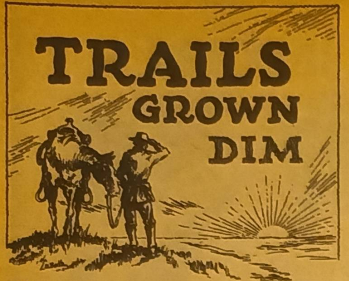

If you have information concerning persons referred to below, do not write to us. Communicate directly with the letter writer.

Walker

I would like to hear from descendants of Decia A. Walker, born 1867, married Thomson; Warner Keifer Walker, 1865; Martha Jan Walker, 1870; Adam Edman Walker, 1871; Ira Sumner Walker, 1873; Charles Westley Walker, 1874; Fanny May Walker, 1876; Pearly Idalla Walker, 1877; Mary Elizabeth Walker, 1878; and Anna Bell Walker, 1881. They were children of a Civil War soldier, George W. Walker and his wife, Elizabeth Newcomer of Ohio and Illinois.—C. G. Walker, 2320 North 52nd, Lincoln Nebraska 68504

Whitford

David and Sally Whitford, last known in Bolliver, Tennessee about 1814 to 1865, had a son, William Penn Whitford, and a daughter (name unknown). William Penn married Martha (?) and had many sons. The Whitfords moved from Tennessee to Texas about 1880. One son of William Penn Whitford was Bruce, who had a son, Hollis, born in 1909. We are trying to locate the father of David Whitford, believed to have come from New York or Pennsylvania. We believe his wife, Sally, was a Brooks.—June Whitford Conn, Cinco C Ranch, Route 1, Box 262 Uvas Road, Morgan Hill, California 95037

Washington Rye

Washington Rye was born about 1850 in Lawrence County, Missouri and about 1868 married Mary Ann Murray in Barry County, Missouri. The minister was Willam Crawford Gilbert. In 1869 a son, William C. Rye (my father) was born. The Lawrence County Census of 1850 shows a Washington Rye, age ten, of the U. S. Post Office of Dunkle's Store, Missouri. About 1875 it appears that Washington Rye left his family and I have found no further tracks.—R. W. Rye, 1245 St. Johns Avenue, Billings, Montana 59102

Governor L. R. Bradley

We would like to hear from anyone knowing anything about L. R. Bradley, second Governor of Nevada. We believe his term was 1871-77 and that he came from Texas. We are especially interested in tracing the family back to Texas.—Mrs. Jeanne D. Hogan, 6915 State St., Huntington Park, California 90255

Gotcher Families

I would like to hear from anyone with information on the name of Gotcher, Goucher, Gocher of Texas, Alabama, Tennessee and South Carolina. I am very interested in receiving information on James Goocher who married Nancy Arledge and originated from Alabama or his son, William Riley, who married Rhoda Margaret Hancock in McLennan County, Texas.—Perry Gotcher, Box 754, Sweetwater, Texas 79556

Earnest (or Ernest) Abner Banks

John D. Banks, son of Ephredis and Lucy (Womach) Banks, was born January 22, 1873 at Eldorado Springs, Missouri. When John was a young man he and his bride, Mary, came to the Boise, Idaho area. They had a son, Earnest Abner, presumably born in February of 1896. When Earnest was nine months old word came from Missouri that Mary Banks' mother was critically ill and she returned there with the baby. Time passed and John learned that Mary had come down with "the fever" and passed away also. But nothing more was ever said or heard of the infant Earnest. I would like very much to find out what became of him.—Mrs. Anna Banks, Valley, Washington 99181

Ford-Dennis

I am trying to locate Sid Dennis and Maggie (Ford) Dennis, my father's cousins. My father was Amory Jones. Maggie Dennis' father was Henry Ford. To the best of my knowledge she was raised at San Saba, Texas. Henry Ford and his family lived a while at Aspermont, Texas and at Haskell, Texas. After Maggie married Sid Dennis they moved to Raton, New Mexico. I know that in 1914 they were living in Raton and that she was about twenty-four at that time. —C. W. Jones, Junction Star Route, Box 13B, Ingram, Texas 78025

George Hanna

I am seeking information on my great-great-grandfather George Hanna who came from England in the 1840s and settled where Waterloo, Iowa is today.—Mrs. C. J. Foreman Jr., D.S.R. Box 41, El Campo, Texas 77437

Leroy Swaney

I am seeking information on my uncle Leroy (Lee) Swaney who was born in Pennsylvania after 1832. His brothers were Otho, William, Daniel, Alfred, Clark, Joseph and his sisters were Ellen, Kate, and Jane. At the time he left his home and went west he was not married. His mother's maiden name was Sallie (sometimes called Sarah Victor).—Oma Swaney Lopez, Box 1115, Desert Hot Springs, California 92240

William J. Hopson

I am hoping that perhaps some readers may have some information on a man who I believe is my grandfather. His name is William J. Hopson, a bronc rider prior to World War I and after, who rode by the name of Tex Crockett.—Jack W. Pickerd, 1114 Emory, Imperial Beach, California 92032

Southern Families

I would like to correspond with someone who is interested in Adams from White County, Georgia; Harris from Georgia, Virginia, and the Carolinas; Morton from Gilbert, Alabama; Francis from Tennessee and Mississippi, and Turner from Mississippi.—Mrs. O. B. Francis, P. O. Box 184, Parker, Arizona 85344

"Broncho John" Sullivan

Would any readers know about the old Western scout named "Broncho John" Sullivan who was a very close and dear friend of my mother, Mrs. Elsie Marquardt Musick of Valparaiso, Indiana? When she was a child he took her for rides on his western wagon. When I was visiting in Valparaiso I met Broncho John who gave me a bracelet and told me that he loved my mother so much he wanted to meet me. I would like to have the history or any information that anyone may have who knew Broncho John and especially a picture of this wonderful old scout who was a dear close friend of our family.—Mrs. Anne Embick, Loganton, Pennsylvania 17747

Bill Anderson

I am interested in tracing the family of Bill Anderson ("Bloody Bill"), my great-great-grandfather. I believe most of his family resided around Warsaw, Missouri. I know he had several children, one by the name of American who married a Richard Cross. If anyone has any information of him or his family, please write.—Pal N. Stults, P. O. Box 56, Mindenmines, Missouri 64769

Pointen (Pointing)

My great-grandfather, Charles Pointen (Pointing) was naturalized at the Marine Court in New York City, May 31, 1830. His son, John N. Pointen (my grandfather), was born August 23, 1832 on Orange Street, New York City. To date I have never found another Pointen other than my brother. My father, John Pointen, was born February 20, 1858 at Williamsville, New York (near Buffalo) and was an only child. I know my grandfather had a brother or brothers as one was a doctor and went either to Massachusetts or Georgia some time in the 1860s. I would appreciate it if anyone knowing the family would contact me.—E. J. Pointen, 738 40th Street, San Pedro, California 90731

Hendrix—Chapman

My grandfather, George W. Hendrix, was born in Murray, Kentucky June 27, 1832 and died at Woodbury, Texas May 4, 1884. He and Elizabeth Chapman were married October 21, 1851, where I do not know. I have heard they lived in Illinois before the Civil War. He enlisted in Captain Whiting's Company, Illinois Volunteers, near Springfield, Illinois August 20, 1861. If anybody knows who George's father was and where he was born or who Elizabeth's parents were and can furnish me this information, I would appreciate it very much.—E. E. Hendrix, 4720 San Jacinto #10, Houston, Texas 77004

Beaver Family

I am looking for old friends. In 1914 we were living in a small town, Leaday, Coleman County, Texas on the banks of the old Colorado River. We had lots of dear friends, but my favorites were the Beaver family. We went to school with Lee and Anna. I would appreciate any information on either of them. There was an older sister and a younger brother, but I can't remember their names. We left and went south and they moved to Florence, Williamson County, Texas. That was the last I heard from them.—Mrs. W. S. Thorne, 5379 Old Redwood Highway North, Santa Rosa, California 95401

Bohanon—Smith

Lost half-brother—Smith or Bohanon—born April 1911 at Luling, Texas. His father, Carl Bohanon, did live at Vera, Texas. His given name is believed to be Carl or Larry. He was adopted when he was six months old to a Loren Smith who lived at the time in or around San Antonio, Gonzales or Lockhart, Texas. In 1938 he wrote and tried to contact his parents who lived at Vera. A few years ago he wrote to our grandfather, Albert B. Bohanon of Seymour, Texas, wanting help to obtain a birth certificate. It was believed he was living in South Texas at that time. Our mother was staying with Mr. and Mrs. John Bohanon of Luling at the time of his adoption. If it would be any help, Johnny Turnbow was sheriff in 1910 and 1911 either at Luling or Gonzales, Texas. Anyone knowing or having heard of this person or his foster parents, please write.—Mrs. W. C. Henson, 2702 14th Street, Vernon, Texas 76384 or call LI 2-9468

Harmon V. Platt

Twenty-five years ago, when I was working at Douglas Aircraft Company in Santa Monica, California, we were joined at our job by a man from Oklahoma City and perhaps other points in that state. His name was Harmon V. Platt and he was a little older than the rest of us. At lunch and break periods he could spin off yarn after yarn in as interesting a manner as one would ever want. He enlightened us considerably regarding Oklahoma history, folklore, and many phases of pioneer life as lived by his parents. Harmon and I became very good friends until he was transferred by the Army to another defense plant or was discharged. I regret that I lost track of this interesting personality. I would like any information leading to the whereabouts of him or, if he sees this letter, I hope he will write to me.—Robert L. Wilson, 1920 Harrison Avenue, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502

Salisbury—Hicks

I need information badly concerning my grandfather, Samuel Salisbury, who lived in Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri and had sixty acres in Missouri. He married Margaret McCalister. Who were their ancestors and where did they come from? They had four children of whom my mother, Mertie Augusta, was one.

Also please help me on my dad's ancestry. He came from Pennsylvania to Ohio and on then to Indiana. My grandad was Allison Hicks, married to Emmaline or Caroline Hilderbrand (may have a "t"), but who were their parents, where were they buried? I found Grandma Salisbury's grave south of Hillsboro, Indiana.—Mrs. Eva L. Hicks Keys, 1445 Shell Street, Hammond, Indiana 46320

Duke—Davison

Does anyone know the parents of Henry Andrew Duke, born in the first quarter of the 1800s in North Carolina and died in 1848 in Franklin Parish, Louisiana, or any of his brothers and sisters?

Does anyone know the parents of Isiaih D. Davison (Davidson), born 1820 in North Carolina? His parents died while he was a baby and a sister, who was married to a Mr. Richardson, raised him in Tennessee. Isiaih died in 1883 in Panola County, Texas.—Mrs. Fred Caudle, 3500 Lockheed, Midland, Texas 79701

Lyons and Purvis

My grandfather, George Harris Lyons (who had an alias of Emerson at one time) was born on September 8 between 1880 and 1887 at Biloxi, Mississippi. He was baptized in the Catholic Church there on June 6, 1887—the only fact I know for sure.

His father was John Lyons, origin unknown, and his mother was Martha Elizabeth Showers, origin also unknown. They had two other children besides my grandfather: Clyde Lyons who raised roses for a livelihood and Florence Lyons who married a man named Hall. They lived in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

My grandfather married Jeanette Purvis, date unknown, and they had a number of children. The facts concerning these children are unknown all except for my mother and two aunts. It is believed they died at birth or when very young. This is one of the things I would like to find out about. At one time they lived in Memphis, Tennessee.

My grandmother died last year in her home in Century, Florida at about seventy to eighty years old. There is no record of her birth and she was unable to remember. Her parents were William Augustus Purvis and Sally Sarah Ann Godwin. I believe the South is full of Purvises and Godwins. If anyone knows anything about the origin of either of my grandparents, I would love to hear from them.—Mrs. Joyce Pope, P. O. Box 126, Rockland, Idaho 83271

Powell

Please contact me if you have any information on these people: James Douglas Powell, born May 23, 1855 in Georgia (county unknown), married Sue H. Rankin (date and county unknown) somewhere in Texas. Also his brother, John Powell (birthplace unknown), last heard of somewhere around Dallas, Texas. Also any information on their mother, known only as Grandma Wallace.—Mrs. Guy E. Powell, Box 556, Center Point, Texas 78010

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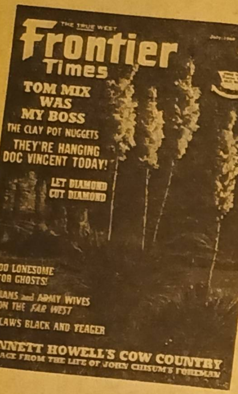
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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

LIFE ON THE CIRCLE C

Walt Coburn's *Pioneer Cattleman in Montana* (University of Oklahoma Press, $6.95) is the story of the Circle C Ranch owned by his father, Robert Coburn. The Circle C was located near the Little Rockies between the Milk and Missouri Rivers—Robert Coburn acquired it from the great pioneer cowman Granville Stuart. Walt spent his summers on the Circle C and his winters at the family home in Great Falls so he could attend school. In 1957 he wrote *Stirrup High*, a most fitting introduction to this fuller account of his own life on the range and of the family ranching operations over a thirty-year period, 1886-1916. There is much about the Wild Bunch in this book but this reader found Walt's account of ranch life even more fascinating. Walt's three older half-brothers, Will, Bob and Wallace, had but little time for the button but Horace Brewster, the ranch foreman, was his guide, philosopher and friend. Walt credits Brewster with teaching him "whatever I knew about punching cows." This was an exciting era in Montana range history—Walt does a great job of setting it forth. There are some fine family and range photos and a folding illustration in color of the painting Charles M. Russell did of Walt's three half-brothers. This reviewer believes this may be the first appearance in print of this particular Russell painting. The appendix reprints some additional material on the Wild Bunch—some were former hands on the Circle C, and there is an index. Highly recommended and for those who want an added touch, Walt tells us that he has supplied a number of book dealers with a printed autograph sticker with a steer head sketch by a young artist, Cynthia Rigden of a pioneer Arizona ranching family. Ask for it.

THE HANGING JUDGE

Law West of Fort Smith (Bison Books, $1.50) by Glenn Shirley is the well researched and vividly written story of Judge Isaac Charles Parker—the hanging judge of Ft. Smith. Judge Parker ruled an area larger than any other court—where for fourteen years his decisions had no right of appeal. The hanging penalty was common, and the penalty was effective in routing the large numbers of criminal characters who inhabited the Indian country after the Civil War. Soldiers of fortune, cattle and horse thieves, prostitutes, whiskey peddlers, gamblers, murderers, and desperados of all color were dealt with. The outlaws of the era included the Daltons, Dick Broadwell, Henry Starr, Ned Christie, Smoker Mankiller, John Billie, Blue Duck, and Cherokee Bill. If Judge Parker's justice was harsh, it was also effective, because he succeeded in bringing order out of chaos.

CHASING THE COMANCHE

Beyond the Cimarron (The Brown Press, $4.75) by T. R. Havens is the story of the Wichita Expedition of 1858-1859, a campaign against the Comanche Indians who scourged the Plains from Mexico across New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma. Long after most tribes had accepted reservation life, the Comanches continued to raid deep into Texas from hunting grounds north of the Red River. The Wichita Expedition was ordered by General Twiggs to punish the marauding Indians, and Major Earl Van Dorn led the troops. The action was highlighted by the battle at Rush Creek in southeastern Oklahoma. Due to the dispersed small bands of Comanches and their guerrilla tactics, no general success against them could be claimed by the military.

MARLIN AND THE BARTLETTS

Zenas Bartlett left his home in Maine for Alabama and then the California gold fields. He finally arrived in Marlin, Texas in 1854—still a young man. *The Marlin Compound, Letters of a Singular Family* (University of Texas Press, $7.50) by Frank Calvert Oltorf records the development and expansion of the Marlin, Texas area as told in letters between family members. The author is president of the Falls Cattle Company and a former member of the Texas House of Representatives.

NAVAJO BOYHOOD

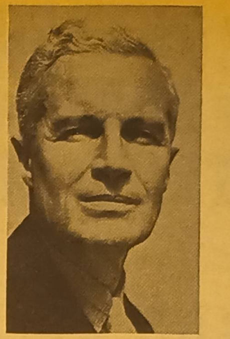
The Smoke Hole (Naylor Co., $6.95) by Charles G. Newcomb and illustrated by Beatien Yazz is a revealing story of life on a Navajo reservation. Story telling is an art to the Navajo, and Newcomb uses this medium to portray customs, religious beliefs and ceremonies, adventure, tragedy, humor and personal relationships. The old grandfather, Aldidoni (Marksman), Yazzi, the grandson, and the trader are the principal characters. Yazzi left his grandfather's hogan and herd of sheep to live and work for the trader and his wife. He visits his grandfather regularly to relate stories of happenings at the trading post and, in turn, be instructed in the old and honorable ways of the Navajo. Under the apt tutelage of his grandfather and the trader, Yazzi grows up educated in the ways of both the white and the red man. Inevitable conflicts and tragedy occur but humor and a warm dignity permeate the book. Author Newcomb spent many years as a trader and has worked continually to better the Navajo's lot. This sensitive and instructive book is recommended, especially to young readers.

RIVERBOAT GAMBLER

Some of the stock villains of old-time melodramas were the riverboat gamblers who allegedly separated the innocents from their money. The gamblers' side of the story is refreshingly told in the unabashed memoirs of the king of the breed in *Forty Years a Gambler on the Mississippi*, a facsimile reproduction by Steck-Vaughn Company, $6.95, of the 1887 edition by George H. Devol. In 138 juicy case histories, George shows that the so-called shorn lambs were merely greedy gullible citizens trying to make a fast dishonest buck at the gambler's expense. Most of the losers crawfished and wanted their money back. An accomplished rough and tumble fighter, George was able to protect his newly acquired estates. Devol says that a man is the only animal that laughs and gambles. His unhappy clients included riverboat workers, businessmen, judges, teachers, lawyers, preachers, barroom touts, farmers and other gamblers. In forty years of working riverboats and railroad Pullmans, George milked his customers of several hundred thousand dollars but saved nothing for old age and ended up selling books, including his own. George once took a flier at the races but made his thousands playing poker and three card monte, a variation of the old shell-game. But he was a sucker for faro where he lost most of his winnings from other sources. This book makes for lively reading.

FRONTIER LIFE

Wild Sports in the Far West (Duke University Press, $6.50) by Friedrich Gerstacker is the narrative of a German wanderer beyond the Mississippi, 1837-1843, reprinted from the English translation of 1854, with introduction and notes by Edna L. and Harrison R. Steeves. A detailed diary kept by Gerstacker was the basis for the German publication which appeared in 1844. Although he did not keep the diary with the intent of publication, news of expanding America during the first half of the 19th century was in great demand. The success of the German publication led to later revisions. The current book from the English translation of 1854 is judged by many to be the best. Gerstacker's travels carried him leisurely through New York, Ontario, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, and northeast Texas. Most of his travel was by foot and he lived off the land except when driven by necessity to periods of work at whatever opportunity was available. He wrote as an observer and not as an analyst. Thus, his works are appealing as news and not as opinion. Perhaps due to the success of his early publication, Gerstacker later followed a career of writing. The title of Gerstacker's book is somewhat deceiving in that he never got much farther west than St. Louis or northeast Texas. Even those points represented the Far West in America to readers of the times, especially Europeans. Gerstacker's exploits, casual living on the frontier with the settlers, and his detailed accounts make as interesting reading now as they did over one hundred years ago.



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by Victor B. Mason

Out of the thousands who read this message perhaps only you and a few others will have the vision and the intuition to realize that it may be intended that you read this page at this time—that the coincidence of holding this magazine in your hands may shape your destiny, may guide you to lots of independence beyond the dreams of avarice.

Don't misunderstand me, I am not speaking of mysterious laws of nature that will sweep you to success without effort on your part. That sort of talk is *rubbish*. If this message is intended for you, you are the kind of man who knows that anything worthwhile must be earned. If the earlier development of your karma has revealed to you that there is no reward without effort, you may now be ready to learn and use the secret I have to impart.

Please don't misunderstand this statement. I am not a philanthropist. Frankly, I am going to charge you something for the secret I give you. Not a lot—but enough to convince me that you are a little above the fellows who merely "wish" for success.

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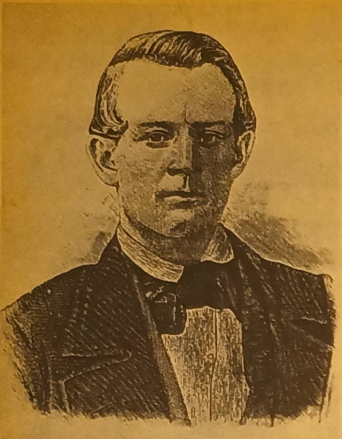
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EXPERIENCES of a FORTY-NINER during a THIRD of a CENTURY in the GOLD FIELDS

By CHARLES D. FERGUSON

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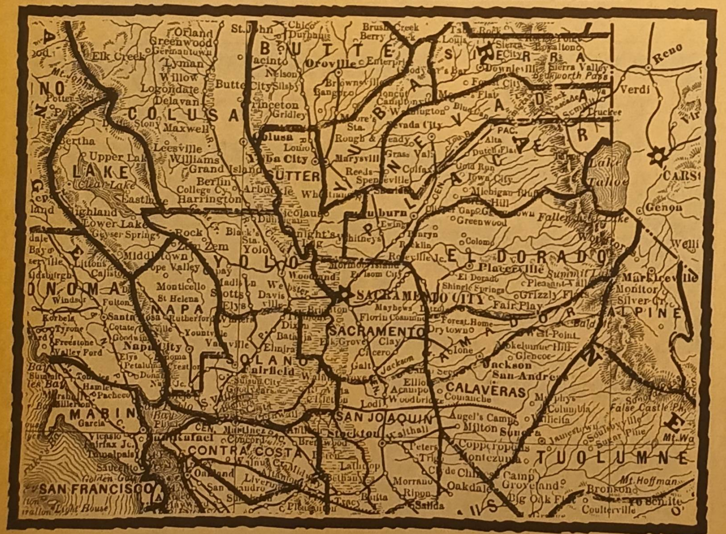
WHAT'S GONE BEFORE

Among the thousands of persons around the world who thrilled at news of Marshall's gold strike in California in 1848 was a boy barely in his teens living in a small town in Ohio. Gold fever being both chronic and contagious, seventeen-year-old Charles Ferguson, accompanied by three friends, set out on horseback from St. Louis, Missouri in the spring of 1850 determined to cross a continent to reach the gold fields. Ferguson not only reached the Mother Lode country but spent thirty years panning for color in the Sierra Nevadas and in Australia. Near the end of a long career, he returned home at last and, persuaded by friends, sat down to write an account of those three decades.

Part One unfolded a fascinating tale of adventure, hardships, and joys encountered and the persons and places visited by the party as they crossed the West of a century ago over the Great Plains, the Rockies, the Great Basin, and the High Sierra. Finally reaching the gold camps the young men joined in the excitement and profit, prospecting along Butte Creek, on Reese's Bar, in Morris' Ravine, on Rich Bar and Nelson Creek.

For the ambitious, there were also fortunes to be made in lucrative occupations which required no pick or pan. Momentarily sidetracked from his dreams of gold from the earth, as the final half opens Ferguson is deliberating between trying his hand at hauling freight between Long's Bar and Sacramento or going into the dairy business in Marysville. At that point, however, "a circumstance occurred that changed all my previous plans and probably all my after life."

Central California in an 1884 map. Many of the gold camps Ferguson mentions still can be found in Butte, Sutter, Yuba, Nevada, and Placer Counties.

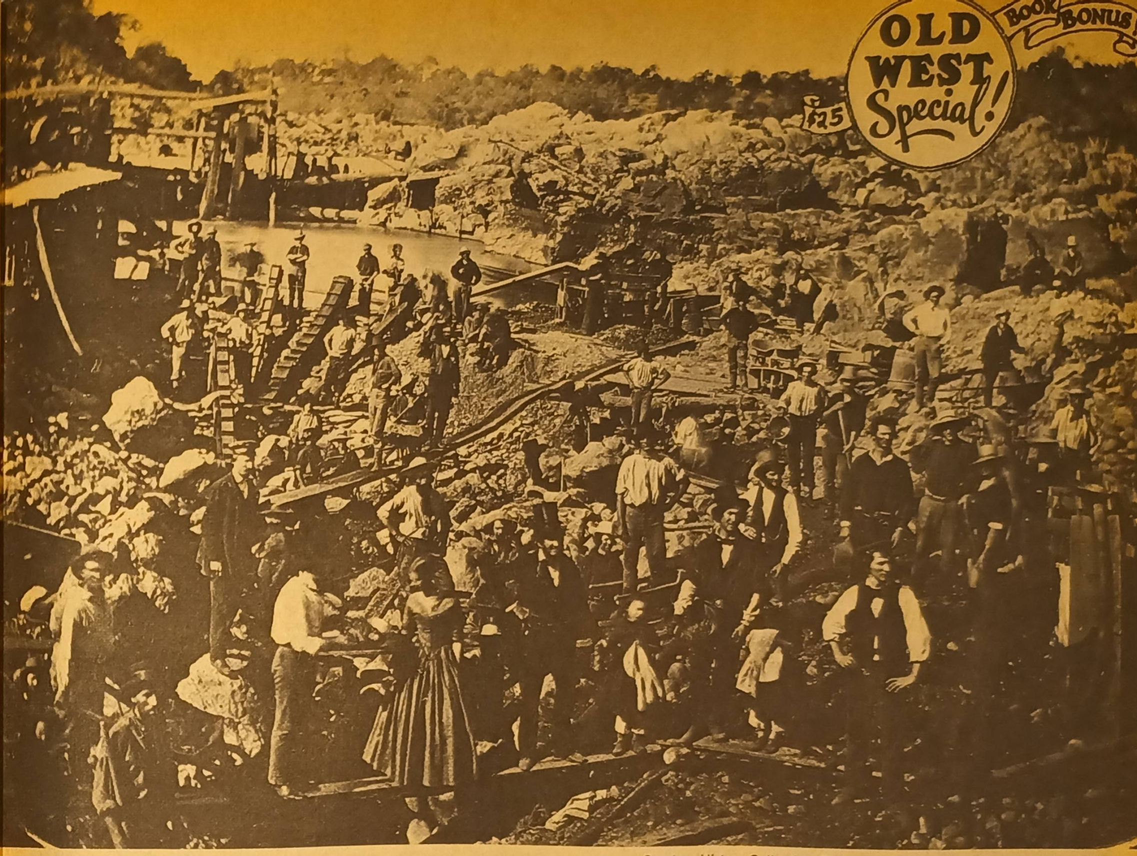


BEFORE I LEFT Farmington, Ohio a party from that town and vicinity had started for California, among whom were Shurben H. Loveland, Lyman Wolcott, James Holly, Benj. Johnston, John Moore and Daniel Powell, all of whom I had known from my childhood. James Holly was my cousin. I met a man from Nevada City who knew the party and told me that Holly and Johnston had died and Moore had returned home; that the rest were in Nevada City and he could direct me right to their cabin. That was enough; nothing less than a double-locked prison would have been able to hold me from going at once to the boys.

But before taking the reader to Nevada City, it may be of interest to say something of the Marysville of that day. Those who have known it in later years can judge somewhat of the change which time has wrought between 1850 and 1887. When I first arrived there, it probably contained about 2,500 inhabitants. Nearly all the buildings were frame, covered either with canvas or paling split out of pine six feet long and nailed on like clapboards, with generally a rather gaudy looking front covered with a flashy sign—especially the gambling houses such as the Montezuma, Eldorado, Magnolia and others. All these houses were equipped with a drinking bar running the entire length of the building where the frequenters of the house could always procure refreshments for the inner man in the shape of cocktails, sangarees, mint-juleps, sherry-cobblers; in fact every possible concoction that the mind of man could devise to extract money from the miner when he came down from the mines with his nuggets and bags of dust and who in almost every instance spent his money like a prince, or rather like a fool.

At the farthest end of a room one would observe a platform or stage for a band of musicians or singers, the performers varying in number according to the business of the house. In front of the bar and all through the room were tables from four to six feet long; on each side was seated a man and in the center was a pile of silver dollars and gold coin, principally doubloons, a Spanish coin equal to sixteen of our dollars.

At other tables were roulette, A B C games—everything that could induce the miner to spend his money. The early history of gambling in the gold regions of the West is not the most edifying reading; it is too long and the story and the narrator are often deemed alike incredible. I venture however to relate a single instance which fell under my own observation: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"The Elephant is yet alive, in Californi-a": Marysville about 1850.

TWO MINERS came down from Rich's Bar on Feather River on their way home to the States with $14,000 between them, and stopping at Marysville overnight visited one of the gambling houses. They made some small investments at first in the "bank," which seemed to be profitable, and soon got warmed up to make larger investments and take greater risks, and the result was that they found their last dollar gambled away and they returned to the mines dead broke.

I ought perhaps to balance the foregoing instance by relating news a little more cheering on account of the tender age of one who boldly "bucked the tiger." A butcher there had a little brother about twelve years old who went into a gambling house one evening with eight dollars and at midnight he went home with $2,400. The brother took it from him and laid it safely away. The next day the boy was begging of his brother to let him go back and try his luck again, but he would not let him go till evening, when he gave him eight dollars more and let him start out. He returned with $800 which his brother took as before and promised to keep it safe for him and invest it so that he would have it with interest when he should become of age. Then his brother told him if he ever went into a gambling house again to gamble, he would put him aboard the next ship that sailed and send him home!

There was but little commercial business done in Marysville except a little packing for the upper Feather River. Most of the trade went to Sacramento. Yuba City was already noted but for not much more than for its gambling houses. One day while walking through the market of Marysville I saw some pears for sale. I had seen no fruit yet in the country, and all my boyish appetite was aroused. I took a pear and ate it and was about to take another when it occurred to me to ask how much they were apiece, at the same time pulling out a silver dollar to pay for the two. It somewhat jogged my intellect when in a modest and innocent way I was told that they were only $2.50 apiece. I suddenly discovered that the one I had already eaten was sufficient for me at that time.

I paid for it and walked on to meet a vendor of onions who told me that he was disposing of his vegetables for the remarkably low price of $3 a pound. I purchased of him one good large onion for $2, and ate it raw and thought I had never before tasted anything half so delicious. Up to this time there had been no fruit imported into the country except dried apples and peaches, which were to be had at one dollar a pound; dried chili beans at the same price; pickled peaches at $16 a gallon; jar onions and cucumbers and other like pickles at $8 per half-gallon jars. So it is manifest that one had to make something to live; yet scarcely anyone ever stinted himself even at the above prices. Board was $21 a week at the most common boardinghouses. The food was mostly pork and beans, plenty of bread and beef, the latter the cheapest article of food in the country; dried apple sauce, tea and coffee, and all this ample bill of fare for $21 a week or for $1.50 per meal.

Such was the case wherever I went, up to the summer of 1851 when garden vegetables began to be raised plentifully. I remember paying $1 a pound for potatoes. We could not afford the luxury of eating them boiled but used to slice them up like cucumbers with vinegar. This was not for the love of them in this style but as a preventative of scurvy. When potatoes got down to $30 a hundred pounds, myself and another each bought a hundred pounds and carried them on our backs three miles, thinking we had a great prize.

I WAS determined to see the Ohio boys at Nevada City, as it was then called, about thirty-five miles from Marysville up in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. I struck out one morning as soon as daylight and followed up the Yuba River for some miles, passing through a place called Long Bar. It was more than a mile long. The river was then very low for the snow had all melted and it was the miners' harvest. I was asked more than twenty times if I wanted to hire out, the wages offered being $16 a day. But as I had set my heart on finding the boys from my old neighborhood in Farmington, Ohio, $16 a day had no tempting charms for me. It is utterly impossible for me to describe the feelings of anxiety to see them. I had been a boy always living in a country town, had never been among strangers till leaving home, and had seen none since but strangers; but now that I was about to mingle among my early childhood companions, it seemed to me I could not control my impatience to get to them. But time brings an end to everything and so it did to my journey from Marysville to Nevada City.

I made Wood's Ravine on the west side of Nevada City about four o'clock the same day. My informant had directed me so correctly and minutely that I was enabled to go to their cabin without difficulty or even inquiry. I rapped at the door. Oh, how my heart beat with anxiety for fear that the man had misinformed me for somehow I had forebodings that he was mistaken as to the party, and when a stranger came to the door my heart sank. I told him I had made a mistake, I thought, that I had been informed a party lived there by the name of Loveland, Powell and Wolcott.

How my heart leaped with joy when I heard a voice from within say, "Yes, Charlie, we are all here, come in." That voice was Lyman Wolcott's. He was sick in bed and the stranger was taking care of him. The other boys were out at work and would all be in at night. It seemed to me like being at home again among my own people. The boys did not get home till dark and we lit no light until they came so as to see if they would know me by my voice. Loveland came first; he knew me at once. I thought Powell would not, as I had grown considerable since he had seen me or heard my voice. Soon he came in while I was sitting by Wolcott's bed talking to him and went directly to wash himself. All at once he stopped and rushed across the cabin to me and exclaimed: "Deacon Ferguson or his ghost! I will swear that is his voice."

Unlike the Dutchman who explained that the reason why he called his son Conrad was because that was his name, the boys of my neighborhood in Ohio called me "Deacon" because I had none of the sober and sedate qualities or characteristics of that excellent church official. So neither got the laugh on the other. We were all mutually delighted at this meeting in this part of the world so remote from our native home. My pleasure was greatly enhanced from the fact that I now heard from home, at least indirectly, which I had not since I left Illinois.

Of course I was to stop there. I could, they said, do as well there if not better than elsewhere. We would be all together, knew each other, and they had heard from home and were expecting a lot of the boys out any day from Ohio. They were coming across the Plains and were sure to be there, they said, in a few days. And sure enough it proved true for in a very short time they got word that the boys were coming by the Truckee route and were then camped some seventy-five to one hundred miles out. But their oxen had given out and what was worse they were out of provisions. They had sent word by some emigrants who were a little better off and able to proceed, but had nothing to share. Seldom if ever at that stage of the journey would a party have a surplus.

We got the news in the morning and by two o'clock in the afternoon, Loveland and Powell had bought five mules and started with three, packed with provisions for the starving and distressed Ohio boys.

SO IT WAS universally throughout California; it only needed to be known that one was in want and there were always willing hearts and hands, yes, money too, to relieve. No matter how total a stranger it might be who was distressed, the miners rose to every occasion. There was something about those rough exteriors which enclosed such great and generous hearts that make my very soul stir within me as I contemplate them now when time and death and distance have separated us forever. They had all suffered and knew what it was to suffer and when they heard of one in distress, their time, their money was nothing—their only thought was concerning the most speedy and effective relief.

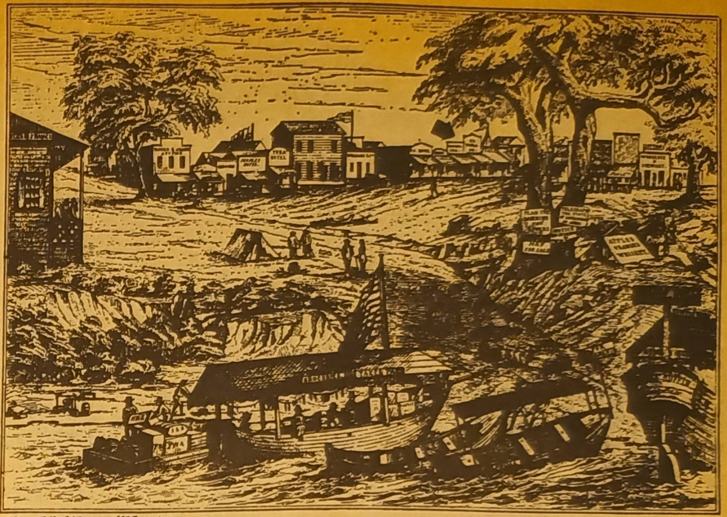
Many are the gamblers who even I have seen, on hearing of some poor fellow who was sick or in want, put his hand in his pocket and pull out twenty or thirty dollars and hand it over saying nothing more than, "Give that to him," and try at the same time to look unconcerned or indifferent. I venture to say right here that if I were sick, without money, without acquaintances, and among strangers, if honest and deserving I would rather fall among those rough California or Australian miners and gamblers than among many Eastern men of wealth whom I know, who made broad their phylacteries and assume the virtues that should come of Christian civilization. The latter would refer me to the relief committee who would send me "over the hills to the poor-house," while the former would put his hand in his pocket and hand out immediate relief or take me by the hand and say, "Come along, Cap, you can turn into my hut until something turns up; I think I know of something for you when you are well enough; in the meantime stop with me and we will see what can be done. If you are sick, I'll bring a doctor."

Say to him that you have no money. He will say, "Never mind, we will talk of the pay when you get well." That was the sort of stuff the early pioneers of California were made up of and thousands will bear me out in this statement. Those were trying times and they tried the qualities of men. Had it got abroad that one had refused to relieve a fellow in want, he would have been lynched sooner than for stealing a mule, and heaven knows that that was not only abundantly speedy but sure as death or taxes. However with the exception of cases of sickness, there was less want in California even at that time than in any country I was ever in.

I abhor gambling in all places and in all forms whether it be in mining regions or Wall Street or whether it be done at wholesale or retail. But society considers and treats gambling very much as it does the liquor traffic. It prosecutes and punishes the retailer and sends the distiller and brewer to the legislature and to congress. It legislates against betting on elections and horse racing as a bad and disgraceful business. But betting becomes respectable and legitimate when made on the price of wheat in Chicago or railroad and mining stocks in New York. And the man who can "corner" the wheat market or bring to ruin the original stockholders, whose honest money built the railroad, is a hero, and such wholesale gamblers are called "kings." When the hypocrite who has been regarded by confiding women and children as a saint takes up his permanent residence in Canada with the funds of a savings bank, he is never spoken of as a thief or robber but always respectfully referred to as a financier. When a railroad official converts to his own use, or "misappropriates" as the financial term is, a million dollars, his colleagues may growl a little but when he endows a theological seminary or consecrates a memorial window to the relict of the deacon of his church, society is complacent and rejoices in the apparent belief that, after all, his virtues balanced his rascalities.

When I came into California the territory had only just been annexed to the United States. Immigration soon commenced to pour in rapidly, and as there were no law-makers, consequently there were no laws—at least we were told so by the rough element, which is always a numerous class when a sudden influx of people are thrown together under great excitement, such as was produced by the gold fever. And that class will find one another out quicker than any other, but the better class are sure to rule in the long run and so it was in California. The thieves and robbers boasted that we had no law but were told that laws could soon be made for them and all such as were not disposed to be law-abiding. And so there was.

As soon as there was a case of theft or robbery the culprit was hunted down. We would sometimes hear of men running around with rope in hand crying out for the hanging of a thief or robber under such a state of excitement that possibly an innocent man might suffer, but generally cooler men would come to the front and never in all my experience did I either know or hear of an excited crowd carrying their designs into execution until the culprit had had a fair and impartial trial according to the forms prescribed in the unwritten code of lynch law. The proceedings of Judge Lynch's court, which I have attended, were something like this: The culprit being secured, the crowd would adjourn to some proper place where they would select a judge—generally the most prominent and influential man of the town or place—then a jury of twelve men, or sometimes a less number, of like character of the judge or as nearly as possible as could be found in the place. Also a prosecutor (a lawyer if possible) and if the party accused had no friends they would appoint the most competent man to be found for his lawyer. The tribunal thus constituted, witnesses were examined and arguments made by the counsel. The jury would bring in a verdict of guilty or not guilty, and if guilty the judge passed sentence. If for stealing, the sentence was for a certain number of lashes, more or less according to the enormity of the crime and the previous character of the culprit. Such was the invariable course pursued except when the criminal was caught in the act, when no trial was deemed necessary. I never witnessed but one lynching and that was of an Indian. I shall hereafter have occasion to allude to the subject of lynch law.



Lith. of Pollard & Peregoy San Francisco

Courtesy Wells Fargo Bank History Room, San Francisco

Marysville in 1850, the year Ferguson first visited there. Two gambling houses he describes, Magnolia and Eldorado, are side by side (arrow).

LOVELAND and Powell found the boys they started out to relieve, on the third or fourth day. The party consisted of Henry G. Taft; Homer Stull, brother of Judge John M. Stull of Warren Trumbull County, Ohio; Ira and Amaziah Ross and Samuel Strickland, all from my old town of Farmington in that county. There were also in the company Austin Perry from Mesopotamia, same county, a Mr. Mayhew of Bristol, Trumbull County; Samuel Beecher of Mantua; George Raymond of Hiram, Portage County; and another man from the latter place whose name I cannot recall but who, poor fellow, was accidentally shot by one of the party just as Loveland and Powell found them. And so it was that after all his toil and sufferings for want of food, he was killed almost the same moment that relief arrived. So the camp was in a state of mourning when otherwise it would have been a scene of rejoicing. They buried him as Sir John Moore was buried —"No useless coffin enclosed his breast."

Their teams having got somewhat rested, they started back for Nevada, arriving in due time and there was great rejoicing on both sides; they that their long and toilsome journey was ended, we to see them and to hear from our dear old home and the ones we had left behind. No one knows how dear home folks and friends are unless one has been separated from them. I know from sad experience.

Many of those boys are now dead. Some died before I left California—George Raymond, Horgan and Austin Perry whom I have known for many years. Homer Stull lived to return home, but afterwards died defending our flag and Union. Henry G. Taft still lives and is in South America, as I have recently learned (1887) from his brother in Warren, Trumbull County, Ohio.

Nevada City, it should be borne in mind, is not a town in the state of Nevada but is in California among the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the western slope situated on Deer Creek eight miles south of the south fork of the Yuba River and four miles northeast of Grass Valley. The latter was so named by those who first came to Nevada City taking their cattle there to pasture, there being no grass near the town. Gold had not yet been discovered in Grass Valley. About halfway between the two places was what was afterward called Gold Run which eventually proved to be very rich. Down Deer Creek about four miles was Boyer's Agency. He was supposed to be some kind of an Indian agent although I was never able to learn what he did for the Indians or anyone else but himself. This remark is not intended in disparagement of Mr. Boyer but only that I can't see what the government or the Indians wanted of an agent there. About halfway between Boyer's and Nevada City was Wood's Ravine, so named after a man who lived there and afterwards officiated as alcalde or magistrate. About nine miles down Deer Creek was Rough and Ready diggings, named I suppose from the political campaign title bestowed on President Taylor; but this place was even less complimentary to the President than was suggested by the name, for a harder and more dismal place I never saw.

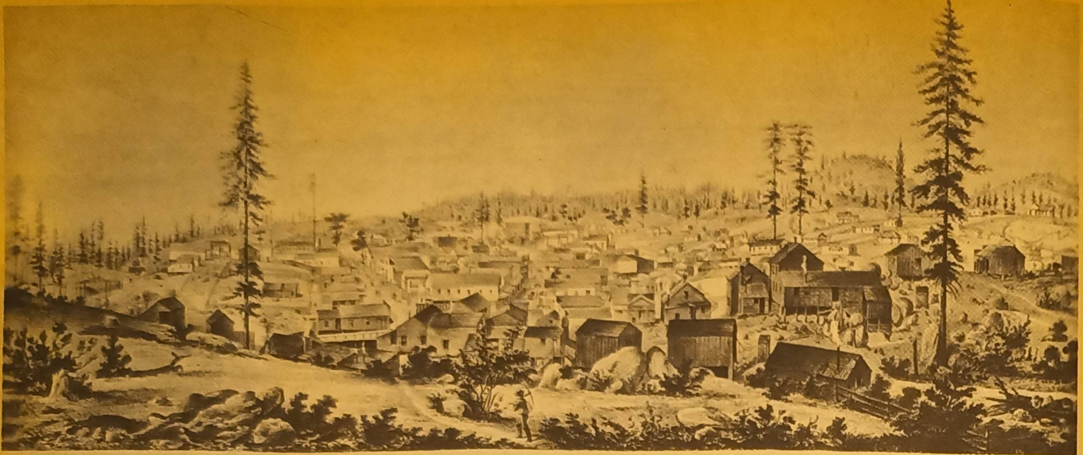
Nevada City was laid out in a deep ravine. It had its Main Street and its Broad Street, and its Kiota Street paralled with Main and a few cross streets. What buildings were erected in my time were on Main and Broad principally. On the south side of Deer Creek was the road to Sacramento and towns below and here Bower Brothers had their express office. They took letters to San Francisco for the modest sum of $2.50 each. I have paid them $10 at a time for letters. A Mr. Baxter who had been clerking for them finally started into the same business himself, having his office on Broad Street.

There was one business house in Nevada City attractive to all and which was eminently successful from the hour of opening its front door. It was Mrs. Phelps' pie house. Mrs. Phelps had a husband; nevertheless she was the man of the house. They had crossed the Plains and brought a cooking stove. Upon arriving at Nevada City, Mrs. Phelps commenced making dried apple pies which sold readily at $1.00 a pie and coffee at 10c a cup. She had a wonderful trade, especially on Sundays when the miners came to town, they having played euchre every evening of the week to determine who should pay for the pies when they went to the "city." She often found it impossible to supply the demand on that day, notwithstanding her efforts in anticipation of the increased numbers. Soon she had increased facilities for business by getting another stove and purchasing a couple of bright-looking cows which made her place look home-like and were a great attraction. There was such a demand for milk that it readily sold at $1.00 a pint, and one-half water at that. I have often seen her place literally thronged with miners waiting for her pies to come out of the oven.

I think she was the first woman to arrive in Nevada City. Mrs. Coates who came across the Plains was the second; Miss Bowers, sister of the Bowers brothers, was the third; a Mrs. Scott who settled out on Rock Creek was the fourth; and Mrs. George Scott was the fifth. These women were a great attraction and had they put themselves up on exhibition they would have drawn great houses. But they were brave, noble and virtuous women. They were not only anxious to make money by honest industry but also to improve society and they had not been long among us before their presence and cheering influence were felt in more ways than one. They put shoulder to the wheel and soon a church was underway. They were angels of mercy and many a poor suffering soul received assistance, comfort and consolation from their motherly and sisterly hands and gentle spirits. They were loved and respected by everyone.

THE FIRST STOREKEEPERS as I remember were Davis & Hurst on the corner of Broad and a street that ran across to Kiota Street. The first principal bakers and butchers were Napper & Webster. Of professional men Dr. Gardner was considered the chief. He died early in 1851, lamented by all. Dr. Livermore was a dentist who came there from Sydney, Australia. Time has obliterated the memory of many names with which I was then and there familiar but I recall a noble-hearted southern gentleman, Dr. Weaver from Memphis, Tennessee. He owned the place called White Hall at the head of Broad Street which will be remembered by many as the place where the ladies held their first bazaar for the building of the first church. I remember it distinctly and I pity the poor fellows who were beset by the ladies as I was. Miss Bowers kept the "post office" at that bazaar and no sooner than a fellow got inside, after paying $2 entrance fee, than he was notified by a pleasant postmistress that there was a letter in the office for him. I was young and felt quite flattered when notified by that young lady in her most winsome manner that she had in her official keeping a letter for me. I stepped up and received a letter at her hands and was in the act of returning her gracious smile as best befitted my countenance when she said in the sweetest of accents, "$2.50." I paid it with alacrity. When I opened the letter I found it to be written in Dutch or Indian, not a word of which could I make out. I was not wise enough to keep the joke to myself but had to go and tell her.

"Dear me, how stupid I am," said she, "here is your letter," handing me



Courtesy California State Library

Nevada City, California about 1856, probably Ferguson's favorite gold camp judging from the frequency of his visits and the length and number of his descriptions.

another. I was innocent enough to receive it when the same sweet seductive voice repeated, "$2.50," and I again discharged my obligation to the post office without shedding a tear.

Mrs. Phelps ran the pie and coffee stand and succeeded admirably in her line. I was not long in falling in with Mrs. Scott who kept the scales. "Dear me," said the lady, "is that you? Why I hardly knew you. Have you been sick?"

I innocently said, "No."

"How you have fallen away!"

I thought not but she was sure I had. "Just step on the scales and I will see."

Like a simpleton I mounted the scales as she requested and weighed five pounds more than usual. "Well, well, I was mistaken," she smilingly said. "People are liable to be deceived. Two dollars, please." I paid it and walked away fully agreeing with Mrs. Scott that people are liable to be deceived, particularly at a ladies' bazaar. I had not been in the house more than an hour when my experience had cost me about $30.00. I don't remember how much the fair netted but it was something enormous. The miners were captivated with the ladies and were willing to pay liberally for just a smile; nor were the ladies sparing of their blandishments so long as the miners' money held out. The gamblers too came in for their share and got as handsomely fleeced as they ever fleeced a poor miner.

Hubbard & Hodge was the first law firm I remember. They had all they could do to prevent litigation and keep peace among the people. Main Street contained three large gambling houses fitted up in the most elaborate style—Barker's, Antonio's and George Scott's. Broad Street had only two, the Central and White Hall. There were however an endless number of small concerns both in and around Nevada. Over the hill near Lassen's tunnel lived a character who may still be remembered by some of the present residents—the Dutch blacksmith, politician and stump orator.

Early in 1851 the government granted Nevada City a post office. It was a blessing to all for we could now write to our friends at home and send and receive letters direct without the expense of $2.50 express charges between there and San Francisco. About the same time, the first newspaper made its appearance, the Nevada *Chronicle*. I am also at fault, at this late day, as to the name of the editor but have been told that the enterprising gentleman became a man of note in the state and was appointed minister to Prussia and afterwards to Russia. Davis and Hurst built the first theatre in Nevada City, or in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The first company that appeared on its boards was under the management of a Dr. Robinson. Many will remember the gentleman by his celebrated Yankee stories told in the name of Hesekiah Pickerell. The first play I witnessed was "Christopher Strap." Soon however they aspired to something higher as society was rapidly becoming more cultivated and select and the "Lady of Lyons" was placed upon the board, Mrs. Robinson taking the role of the lady and a young man named Edwards that of Claude Melnotte. Bowling alleys and billiards were not long in coming in so that by the latter part of '51 Nevada City society was not without abundant places and varieties of amusement.

A store was established in Wood's Ravine by a man from Arkansas whose last name was James. The summer of '51 is especially remembered from the circumstance of the death of his wife. The community deeply sympathized with him, but moreover each person seemed to mourn as for a personal affliction and inconsolable loss, such was the regard and reverence for women where there were so few. When the death of a woman was announced in a distant mining camp, a sudden sadness and silence pervaded; men spoke low to each other and the cabin door was opened and closed lightly as if for fear of disturbing the dead. James subsequently entered into a business partnership with Mrs. Coates whom I have mentioned before. They started a boarding-house in connection with the store and had a flourishing business. Mrs. Coates was a very cheerful woman and her kind and pleasant disposition and vivacious spirit was a stimulating medicine to my own and many other miners' dreary and lonesome life.

I have sometimes feared that an erroneous notion prevailed in the States that the pioneer women of the early California times were of a low order and were regarded by the delvers in the mountains and looked upon by them as base adventurers of an immoral character; but such has not been my experience. I never knew a miner to insult a woman, but on the contrary a woman could visit a camp of miners alone and be treated with higher consideration than many honorable wives, mothers and sisters are treated by men in passing along the streets of our Eastern cities in the evening or even in the daytime. Every miner seemed to consider himself her sworn guardian, policeman and protector, and the slightest dishonorable word, action or look of any other miner or other person would have been met with a rebuke he would remember so long as he lived (if perchance he survived the chastisement).

I MUST NOW return to the time of my arrival at the Ohio boys' hut. In the company that Loveland and Powell went out to relieve and bring in were two other persons whose names I omitted—William Powell, brother, and Edward McCall from Parkman, Geauga County, Ohio. The rescued company all camped with us until they could build a hut. Taft, Stull, Mayhew, Strickland and the two Rose brothers were under a home contract of partnership to share alike so they went in together. Many in that early day came out under like arrangements, but those incipient home-partnerships never held long and were often dissolved before they arrived, certainly within three months after reaching their destination; not always because ill-feeling existed but the thought of being bound together was generally sufficient cause for dissatisfaction. So it was in their case, for after remaining together about three months Taft and Strickland drew out. The other four remained together during their stay in the mountains.

William Powell, Beecher, McCall and Raymond built another hut nearby and thus our village of three huts built on rather elevated ground got the name of Buckeye Hill. There was a man in the party that came across the plains with Loveland by the name of Fisk from Nelson, Portage County, Ohio, whose brother had just arrived by way of Panama—and had contracted the fever. He had been staying with his brother some three months unable to work in the mines; so Fisk concluded to sell out his interest in the hut, take his brother down to Sacramento and start gardening. With the approval of the others I bought him out, including his cooking utensils, for two ounces of gold. Wolcott was about to leave for home and Taft bought him out at the same price so that now our party proper consisted of Loveland, Powell, Taft and myself and we remained together as long as we were in California. Although some one or more were at times away, that was invariably our headquarters and home.

When the mines in and around Nevada City were first opened, they were solely in the ravines. Deer Creek was rockbound and there was no law regulating the size of a miner's claim. Generally a party that first went into a ravine had the exclusive right thereto or as much of it as he or they saw fit to claim. As population increased that rule did not long maintain. The primitive manner of asserting a claim and the limits thereof is best illustrated by the following story: An old prospector and miner of the hardshell type used to take his rifle with him and when at work set it up against a tree. One day a newcomer arrived in the ravine and asked the old miner some questions but the answers were all evasive; but when he inquired how much of the ravine he claimed, the old fellow started up bright and communicative and pointing to the tree where his rifle leaned said, "D'ye see that rifle there, stranger?"

"Yes," said the man.

"Wall," said the miner, "jist as fur as that rifle carries up and down this ravine, I claim—and no further; there, now, you know." Then he went on about his work.

The man left, concluding he would look for diggings elsewhere.

This state of things continued however only for a short time. The miners saw that something must be done and therefore a meeting was called and a rule was established that each miner could hold thirty feet square as a mining claim, but was entitled to buy out as many claims as he pleased providing he kept men at work on them; and that law held good while I remained in California. When mines were first opened and but few, comparatively, had any knowledge of mining gold, everyone had a theory of his own. The general impression was that gold lay in the gravel on the bedrock, and so it did upon granite. Even where the granite was soft it worked itself in a few inches. Many of the crevices in the ravines near Nevada were slate bedrock and loose on the edges and the first workers only took off the gravel, never digging up the slate. I remember Powell telling me of a man who came along when they were at work in Wood's Ravine and laughingly said: "What do you think those fellows are doing up there (on the claim above)? They are digging up the rock for a foot or more down!" and all joined him in the laugh except Loveland who said nothing; but at dinner time he went up to see what they were doing and as they also had gone to dinner he dug up two dishes full of the rock and washed it and in about half an hour came back to the hut with the gold he had obtained. It was found that there was more gold in the rock than in the gravel. Thus we had to live and learn. It was for a time believed that gold was confined to the ravines and gullies and that Nevada diggings would soon be a thing of the past.

Courtesy Bancroft Library

James Marshall in 1852 at Sutter's Mill at Coloma, site of his 1848 gold strike.

TWO MINERS, Heath and Hale, working the gully that ran through the town, or where the town afterwards came to be, came onto a bed of gravel which seemed to run from the gully into the hill, and as they prospected, favorable indications increased. They followed it into the hill and it grew richer and richer as they advanced. When they got in too far to strip the surface they had to tunnel and timber, or "kiote" as they called it.

From this system the Kiote diggings derived its name. All the hills northwest of Nevada City proved to be very rich and gave employment to thousands for many years after. The Kiote diggings were in full blast when I arrived there and there I did my first work. The boys thought I had better hire out until I got a little insight into the business and understood the working of the ground; so I went with them the first day and saw how they worked and timbered up underground at a depth of from thirty-five to forty-five feet. I took particular notice of the manner of timbering and in one day found I could do it as well as any of them. The next morning I started out to look for a job. Generally the first question asked me was, "Where do you come from?" I truthfully answered, "Ohio." No, they did not want me. So I traveled that day to the tune played by the same question and answer till I began to think there was some prejudice against Ohio men.

I went home rather crestfallen and when I told the boys of my day's experience, they laughed and then told me that Galena lead miners were all the rage there. That gave me my cue and the next morning I was on the wing bright and early and had just got into the busy region when I saw some men standing around a shaft apparently consulting. I stepped up and asked if they wanted to hire any hands. They looked at me and then came the same old question. "Where are you from?" "From Galena," I replied, which was again the truth for I was a long way from it. "You are just the man we want," said one of them. They said they had some men working for them that did not understand mining—that they were about to lose their shaft and asked me to get onto the rope and go down and take a look at it and see if I thought it could be repaired.

I lit a candle, got onto the rope, and they lowered me down. I felt rather skittish but my reputation was at stake and it would not do to back out now that I had set myself up as a Galena miner. On inspection I found the shaft badly out of order and so pronounced it when I appeared on the surface, but assured them that I could make it perfectly safe. One remarked that he supposed I would want a helper. Now what a helper was I did not know but thought I would know when I saw one. So I said of course I could not get along without a helper, wondering all the while what kind of a tool a helper was. I felt relieved however when one of them called to a man passing and asked him if he wanted a job. "That," said the man, "is just what I am looking for."

He was engaged and I was still more pleased when I found he had just come across the Plains and I was not liable to be exposed by him in my pretense of being a bona fide Galena miner. Then came the question as to how much I would charge. I looked at the sun and remarked that as it was now about nine o'clock. I would work that day for $12.00, but that if I worked on I should want $16.00 a day. They told me to go ahead, and down my helper and I went. I set him to clearing out the dirt and rocks that had fallen down around the shaft while I took my measures and went to the surface to fit my timbers. I felt safer above than down in the shaft. If the whole thing should fall or the earth cave in, only the helper would be killed and not the expert Galena miner.

Human nature is selfish to the last, even in the best regulated families and

I confess to the common infirmity. I got my timbers all cut by the time my helper got the shaft cleared out. Then I and my timbers went down and we fitted in the first set and made a good job of it. When I went home, the boys wanted to know how I got on and I told them the whole story and we had a good laugh over it and from that time on I went by the name of the Galena miner.

The next day I went back. The helper proved to be a good hand, having worked in the coal mines in Pennsylvania and he knew more about such work than I did. It is an old saying that the devil's children have the father's luck. So it was in our case, for we worked on three days and a better job was never done. When all was in order they were well pleased and offered me the management of the work, the claim being owned by parties that did not themselves work at mining. I remained with them three weeks when it was found that the claim was not paying. I should have been surprised if it had. However, as I had been paid every Saturday, I was content and lost no sleep.

My next employment was by the company of which Loveland and Powers were part owners. Rigby and Peck, two men from Oberlin, Ohio, had originally taken up the claim and sold out to Loveland, Powell and William M. Stewart, later United States senator for the State of Nevada. He came from Mesopotamia, only five miles from my home. I worked for them three weeks, when the water broke in and drowned out all the claims. Mining was suspended for three months, and in the meantime I bought out Powell's share and he afterwards bought out Stewart. We sold a large pile of wash dirt to Herbert Bowers, one of the Bowers brothers. He failed and we lost our money. That's the way the world wagged then and there.

FOR A LONG TIME I had had a feeling that something was wrong with me. I had never felt so before—sluggish, tired, lazy—the latter I had never been guilty of before. Finally my gums got sore and began to bleed and I became subject to excruciating pains. The boys sent for Dr. Gardner who pronounced it scurvy—contracted in crossing the Plains, induced by exposure, anxiety of mind and starvation. He prescribed spruce boughs boiled to a strong tea, which I was to drink and nothing else. A wash of the same with vinegar tinctured with cayenne pepper, including a steam bath of the same at a pretty high pressure were the doctor's directions to the boys for my daily treatment. It was pretty tough treatment, harder to bear than any I had ever inflicted during my professional career among my Ohio patients.

I was put through the steam kettle process by the boys for ten days; was helpless as an infant, having to be carried to and from my bed. The painful part of my affliction seemed to be in my feet and legs. The only way for a long time I could get at ease was in lying on my back on the floor and putting my feet on the table, a luxury I dearly paid for afterwards for when I came to put them on a level with my body the pain was still more unbearable. I would pity the meanest dog in the world that had the scurvy.

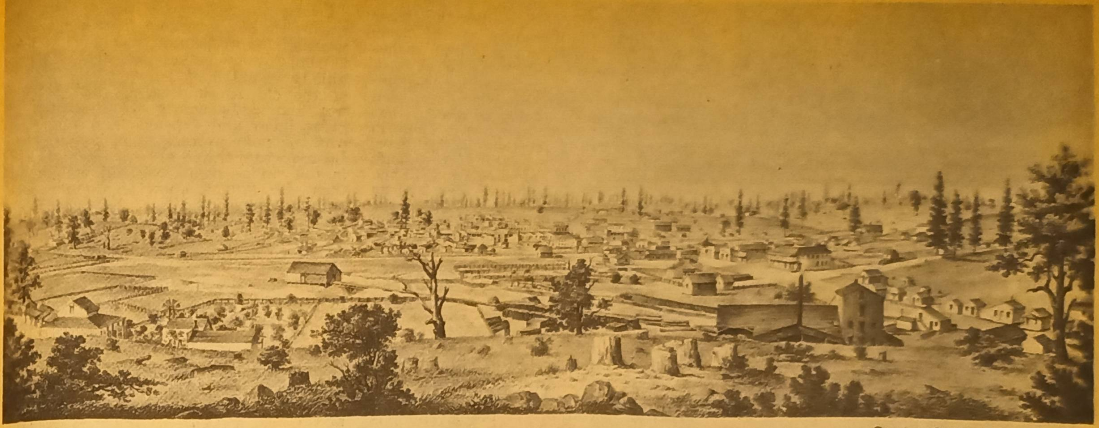
But thanks to Dr. Gardner, the boys, the steam kettle and raw potatoes sliced in vinegar, after some two weeks my pains left me and "Richard was himself again," though rather thin and scanty. I could put my finger on the calf of my leg or any part of my body and press it to the bone and the indentation would remain for half an hour; and when the flesh or skin resumed its smoothness again, a black spot would mark the place of the pressure. If my readers think the above description of "scurvy treatment" unnecessary, my apology is that it is for their benefit; should they ever get a little mangy and unable to get a doctor they can avail themselves of the prescription in my case. As I have lived to tell the story I venture to pronounce the above remedy—in the language of learned Sierra Nevada doctors—a "never failing antiscorbutic."

Although I now called myself well, yet I felt I was not the same person I had been before. Powell and I concluded to go up to a place called Poor Man's Creek, having been offered a chance there by some parties who had come down for provisions. They had a good warm hut already built so we bought a share in their provisions and tools and started up in a few days. The creek was about thirty miles from Nevada on the north side of the south fork of Yuba River. I had overrated my strength and found I could not work. In fact, I gave out before we got to the creek and what to do we did not know, but seeing a mule that had strayed away from someone I said, "If I could catch that mule I would ride him," although I knew that if caught it would be a case for hanging.

Powell said he could catch him and he did. We made a bridle of the ropes we had around our blankets, put the blankets across his back, and Powell lifted me on. We proceeded, keeping a sharp lookout for the owner of the mule. Soon Powell got tired out and got on behind me, I telling him that if we were to be hanged for the mule we might as well get all we could out of him. He was a large, strong animal and carried us both splendidly. That night after our arrival we fed him a large loaf of bread and Powell took him to a place where there was good feed and started him on the back track and that was the last we ever saw or heard of the mule.

A prospector with his cradle and pack mules on the road to fortune.

Courtesy California State Library



Courtesy California State Library

Grass Valley, where a "midnight cry" of a quartz gold discovery in 1851 rang prettily in Ferguson's ears.

It was a good thing we started the mule back that night for it began to snow and I never saw snow fall as it does in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It was soon fully four feet deep on a level and we were snowed in tight and fast. We had nothing to do as we could not get out to our claim to work. We read all the books we had, told all the stories we had ever heard and all we could invent.

One day the monotony of the hut was broken by one of the boys when he came running in, his eyes extending from their sockets, saying, "Boys, boys, I've seen a grizzly bear! A monster!" We hardly believed him at first but when he persisted so earnestly in the truth of his statement, we concluded there was something in it. I went out but did not see the bear but did see his unmistakable path in the snow. I loaded up our guns and pistols and we started in pursuit. The snow was so deep we could only wallow through and that only by keeping in the great furrow ploughed by the bear. We followed for some time but could get no nearer, apparently than when we first started, and it is my impression that there was not a man among us that wanted to get any nearer the mighty beast than we were already. I confess I did not and I was not the biggest coward in the party either.

We had followed the bear nearly an hour when we gave up the chase and returned. One of the boys attempted to discharge his gun but found he could not. Then we tried every gun and pistol and found to our surprise that not one would go off. The secret was that we had wallowed through the snow until the caps had become wet and we congratulated ourselves that we had not overtaken Mr. Grizzly.

WE HAD NOW BEEN snowed in some four weeks and it became more and more tedious hibernating in that lonely place, so Powell and I thought to get out in the world once more and made a break for Nevada. Following the creek about eight miles we reached the Yuba River. This route was much longer than the one by which we came but we thought we would get out of the snow sooner by this way; besides there would be a hut at the mouth of the creek where we could stay overnight.

Having started early in the morning, we wallowed on eight miles, reaching Moore and Peck's hut at dark. They were from Mesopotamia, Ohio. Austin Perry, to whom I have before alluded, had been with them for a time and was out of health, and had had a job clerking for the Jameses, but was unable to stand even this kind of labor and on inquiring about him at Moore and Peck's we were pained to learn that he had died the Sunday previous. We were told that his last request was for a drink of water; that after breakfast someone went to ask him if he would have a cup of coffee but was surprised to find that poor Austin Perry was no more. He was a young man, well liked by all who knew him. He always had a pleasant word for everyone and he deserved a better fate.

We reached Nevada at noon the next day, having made twenty-five miles in half the time it had taken us to make eight the day before. We found that Homer Stull, Mayhew and the two Roses were about to start for home. The next day after we had left Nevada they struck very rich diggings in a dry gulch near their hut, but they never told one of their acquaintances who had spent time and money to take them provisions and rescue them from starvation a hundred miles away in the wilderness. Instead they let in strangers after they had made their pile. They sold their claim to one of the Perrys for a mere song, who took out more than twice as much after them. The world seems to wag strangely sometimes—rescue a man from death, nurse him and feed him and ten chances to one he will never requite the favor. If he has one to bestow, a stranger is the recipient.

We found also that Peck and Rigby had jumped our flooded claims. They were the men we bought of and we were not at all surprised as we had no reason to expect otherwise. We knew they were scoundrels; at least Rigby was, and Peck was a fool, which is worse. I had rather deal with a rogue than with a fool. But Powell and I were not to be bluffed out of our claim. I went to see Rigby but he would do nothing but sell to us so we got our tools and went to sinking a shaft. Rigby came out and made a great bluster but we were not to be bounced by word of mouth, so he went back and the next day we were served with legal process; but we kept right on until the day of trial, having finished the shaft the same day.

Our lawyer made the point that one partner could not jump a claim against his co-partner but the court overruled him and we were beaten. That was the first mining suit in Nevada. As we had finished the shaft a little before the trial, which was on Saturday, we had taken out considerable wash dirt, which is the paying dirt sought for in such diggings. Therefore, early Sunday morning Powell and I got up and set our Long Tom, as it was called, and commenced to wash the dirt we had taken out. Rigby heard us and told the sheriff what we were doing and demanded to be put in immediate possession, but cautioned the sheriff to be careful as we were desperate men. Soon the sheriff was on the ground with his posse and came to me where I was washing. I undertook to argue with him to gain time while Powell went down to see our lawyers, Hubbard and Hodge. But Rigby got impatient and ordered the sheriff to do his duty so he asked me to remove our tools and called his posse to help me. They took the Long Tom, after shutting off the water, and carried it off the claim.

As the water ran off I saw the yellow gold glittering in the box. I seized hold of it and carried it off bodily about fifty yards farther, although at any ordinary time it would have taken two men to do it, but the sight that I had seen gave me for the moment superhuman strength—the gold was so thick in the wet mass in the box that it looked like yellow pudding. I emptied the richest into a tin dish and sank it in a pool of water, then cleaned out the riffle bar and put the contents into another dish and commenced to pan it out carefully. Rigby came around, as I knew he would, to have a look at it. I was very civil to him and washed the little I had left in the box down carefully and showed him the contents of the dish, remarking that the whole thing was not worth quarreling about. He expressed his disappointment and said he thought it was better or he would not have stood out about it. So I knew he did not mistrust that I was deceiving him.

After he had gone, Powell came and we washed out what I had hid away and it turned out greatly beyond our expectations. There was over $200 worth of pure gold in what we had already washed out, and as much more dirt on top at the mouth of the shaft to be washed by somebody. How to buy the claim of Rigby was now the question for if we went to him he would drop on our game, as the expression was. The people around were all in our favor for they considered Rigby had acted a mean part in jumping his partners and were glad when it turned out so poorly, as they supposed it had. Sam Beecher had chafed Rigby and Peck about it and asked them what they would take for the claim—we had sent him for that very purpose. They would take $125.00, they said. We told him to offer $100, giving him that amount in the very gold we had taken out to pay for it. The offer was made and accepted, the gold weighed out in Rigby's purse; but when he came to make the bill of sale he was thunderstruck when told to make it out to Powell and Ferguson.

We washed out the next day from the remainder of the dirt over $200 worth more and then sold the claim to a party from New Zealand for $400. So in the long run we came out ahead of Rigby and the party we sold to did well. They also bought two or three other claims of Powell and myself, claiming that they had better luck in buying of us than of anyone else. Miners are always superstitious about luck. No matter how it goes with them, everything is attributed to luck and a philosopher would sometimes almost think some men were guided by some unseen influence or power, for I have known men for years who no matter what enterprise they enlisted in were sure to triumph; and then possibly luck would forsake them and leave them in poverty where the fickle goddess of fortune first found them. You just can't make an old miner believe but that there is something in luck.

AFTER SELLING OUT our Nevada claims to the New Zealanders, Powell and I went over to Gold Run about halfway between Nevada City and Grass Valley where there had been a late rush. These grounds had been worked a little about the time of the first opening of the Nevada City mines, but the diggings were wet at that time and the miners did not then understand how to contend with driving, or kioting as it was then called. The whole territory being a marsh, it had to be boxed; that is, solid-timbered. The process was to sink a shaft to the bedrock, timbering up as they went down with slabs split from pine logs varying in width from six to ten inches and at least two inches thick. After reaching bedrock, a well-hole had to be sunk in the rock to receive the drainage of the shaft large enough to allow a bucket to fill itself in bailing out the water.

This being accomplished, they commenced to open a horizontal drive on the face of the rock, timbering as they proceeded by putting down a sill with notches in the ends the thickness of the posts with a cap piece about three inches shorter than the sill so as to allow a little slant which increased their firmness. If timbers are thus placed and well fitted, they may possibly be crushed but otherwise will never give away. The crib being made ready for the opening drive, take out the bottom slabs of the shaft on the side of the intended drive to the height of from four to six feet, and as the dirt in the drive is removed put in the second set of timbers, lathing the top with heavy, stout slabs and the sides also, if necessary; this is called box-driving.

In some very soft or sandy ground another set of timbers, which miners call preventive or temporary, are required for every two feet advance and as they are put in the lath, timbers are driven along from the last set over the preventive set; then remove the dirt for two feet more and repeat the process, following up with the main timbers. At Gold Run the nature of the ground was such that it had to be solid-timbered.

Some old California miner who may possibly read this page will not unlikely say, "What is the use of telling us about mining shafts and drivers and sluices? Don't we know all about it? Yes, very true, and I am not unmindful of the folly of carrying coals to Newcastle, but am conscious nevertheless of a new generation who do not know the process of primitive gold-mining in California nor of the hard and toilsome labor of him who delved for gold in '49. The hard realities of the miner's life divest the golden age of nearly forty years ago of much of its poetry and romance.

Powell and myself both hired out to one company to work exclusively underground, timbering in a drive. Each had a helper to wheel away the dirt to the shaft, bring the timber, and assist in placing it. Their labor was by far the hardest, yet they received $3.00 a day less than we. The whole ground was one moving bog from the surface to the wash dirt, which was about one foot thick. The width of paying dirt was estimated from five to one hundred feet.

The company consisted of ten in number who held ten thirty-foot claims and were agreeable men, but their names are forgotten if I ever knew them, for as I have formerly remarked, at that time in California one might be intimate with another for months and not know each other's names except Tom or Jack or Bill. If one had a second name it was generally merely descriptive, as "Feather River" Bill to distinguish him from some other Bill. It was only by mere accident that the full name and residence of an acquaintance was learned. Thus hundreds were forever lost to their friends at home.

I worked in Gold Run some two months and left, Powell remaining. I could not stand working in that water, a large stream of which was running in the drive, and the drippings from the buckets at the shaft. All who worked below were wet through. The claim furnished water enough to wash out all the dirt they raised, which was no small amount for they kept their Long Tom running day and night; working was by shift of eight hours each. I have stopped in a drive until I was obliged to crawl out on my belly, shoving my tools ahead of me, on account of the twisting of the boxing in the wet soil. I have known shafts to twist half around and close up so that a bucket could not pass up or down.

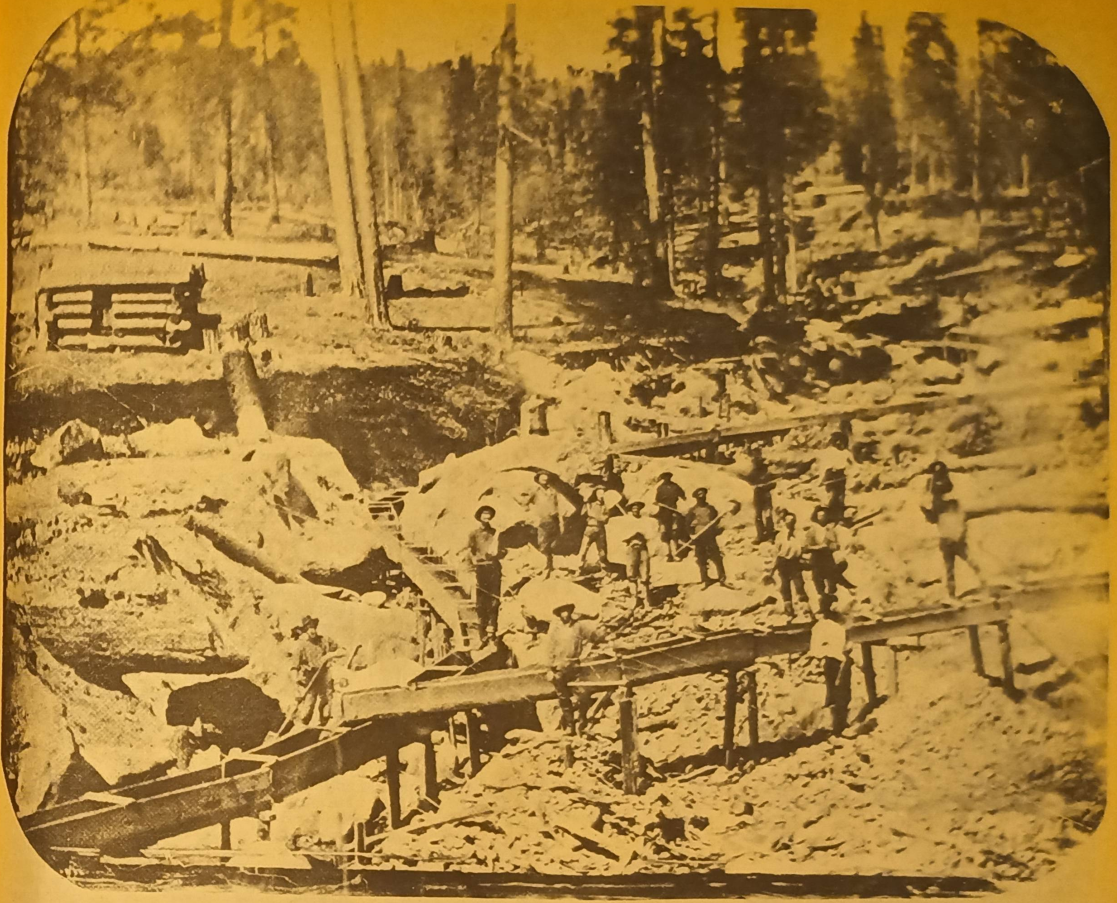
AS I HAD COME to California with lofty aspirations and not to wear out my old clothes, I became dissatisfied with working for wages and concluded to join a company to tunnel one of the Kiote hills to which I have before alluded. Some of the old Kiote diggings had become wet and consequently were opened at great labor and expense, and tunneling was the next process to be resorted to. Lassen's tunnel had already been started in the ravine below the hill, as it was then—for I don't know as there is any such hill there now as I have not been there since 1852, but many will remember where it was then. That tunnel was put in to drain one side of the hill and proved a good speculation.

Our plan was to drain the other side by a longer tunnel, for as the diggings went farther into the hill the wetter they got. Sixteen persons constituted "The Enterprise Company." Among the names I can remember in full were: L. O. Hart, Chester Babbet, H. G. Taft, Sherban Loveland, John Hunter, Richard Bean and C. D. Ferguson. There were also Coates, James and Johnston. All other names have passed out of my memory.

Our tunnel when completed was 1,300 feet long, 6 feet in the clear, and solid timbered—some parts rock cut, some quicksand, and all expensive. Our tunnel was very wet and a vast amount of quicksand was constantly flowing out. We worked five months in the Enterprise and when we had run into the hill where we expected to strike the lead of paying dirt, we found nothing but quicksand and had to abandon it. Many years after, when I had become acquainted with mining, I could see where we had been deceived.

A shaft was subsequently put down not so far distant in the same hill by a party, one of them named Marlo from Iowa, and they struck gold about sixty feet down on a false bottom but went on through it and were compelled to abandon it. But a year afterwards it was discovered that our tunnel had drained the shaft, so when they resumed work on the false bottom it was found to be very rich. Some years later Powell worked it on wages, and I was informed that he had taken out as high as $3,700 in a day. Lewis Taft also told me he had known it to yield from $2.00 up to $60.00 to the tin dishful—and all by reason of the drainage of our tunnel. So in all probability we had just barely missed making our pile and all for the want of a little more experience. Such was the fate of many other pioneer miners in California. The first do not always find reward in their enterprises; they only open up the way and others who come along years afterwards perhaps reap the benefit of their hard toil and great expenditures.

After the Kiote hills had been opened and consequently drained, there came a scarcity of water so that dirt had to be hauled to Deer Creek, a mile or more, at great expense and which prevented many claims from paying. An enterprising man, Charles Marsh, an engineer, undertook to bring water by a ditch from Rock Creek around Sugar Loaf Mountain, a distance of five miles. It was regarded as a doubtful enterprise but it succeeded. The creek however was small and the supply was not ample but it was the beginning of what afterwards proved a great boon to Nevada City. Marsh made a large reservoir to hold the water nights and Sundays, selling it out at the rate of an ounce of gold a day to the first user, to the next below half an ounce, to those lower down a further reduction, when at last it found its way into Deer Creek.



Courtesy California State Library

Elaborate sluicing operation near Nevada City, California in 1852.

William M. Stewart early had his eye open to the business. Many laughed when he first engaged in it. It was putting in a long line of sluice-boxes running down the gully some three or four hundred feet, letting in all the tailings and water that ran from the miners' Toms. He kept a man on them constantly through the day with a sluicing fork, stirring up the dirt and keeping it loose. On Sundays, when the miners were not working, he cleaned out his boxes—with what results none ever knew, except those interested and they kept it to themselves. I can now see that it must have contributed largely to his fortune for much of the dirt was not half washed as it ran out of the various Toms of the miners and found its way into the future senator's sluice-boxes. At any rate, it doubtless paid him better than running for the office of sheriff at the first county election in Nevada in which he was badly beaten, notwithstanding his generous contributions to the expenses of his campaign. He was not however an unpopular man.

THE SUCCESS of Marsh's enterprise awakened others. Two large companies were soon formed and two more ditches were dug, this time up Deer Creek. More water was needed and there was no lack of spirit in Nevada City. Only let the people see there was a want of some improvement, and money was plenty for it. Rock Creek ditch had demonstrated the practicability and profit of such works. There were plenty of surface diggings that would pay if water could be brought from Deer Creek, which was an ample stream to supply the wants of all. The two ditches were built in an incredibly short time. Competition brought water rents down so that surface diggings would pay. Miners made good wages and the companies good dividends. The benefit was alike to the miners and the public.

About the middle of 1851 Nevada City was startled by a "midnight cry" from Grass Valley. It was the quartz gold discovery, reputed to be wonderfully rich but difficult to work though men were making good wages pounding it with mortar and pestle. Soon it was seen that some process must be devised to get the gold dust out easier and faster. Judge Walsh and a Mr. Collins were the pioneers in quartz mills. It was in such a mill some years later that Mark Twain tells of his first job. He says he hired out at $100 a month to feed the stamps and after working a month to their satisfaction they wanted to keep him on at the same wages. He offered to remain at $500 a month but the indignant proprietors ordered him off the premises and he was afterwards sorry he did not ask $1,000, as they would have given it as readily as they would $500. I differ from Mr. Twain in my notion of the value of a month's services then and there for I would not be hired to tend and feed such a machine for even a $1,000 a month. It was four heads of stamps with wooden shanks and the most it could do was to pound out two tons of quartz a day. Job was reputedly a patient man but he never tended a quartz mill like the first one in Grass Valley. Had the grand old patriarch worked a month in such a quartz mill, the record of his noble and patient character would never have come down to our time.

About this time the Bunker Hill Quartz Mining company was organized in Nevada City, but I did not take any stock in it for the reason principally that old Rigby was to be the manager of it and I could take no stock in him or in anything he had anything to do with. A Dr. Rodgers expected to astonish the world with his quartz smelting process. The company went to great expense in building a furnace, putting in a large waterwheel, rollers to crush the quartz, purchasing thousands of cords of wood for charcoal and constructing large fans to blow the fires of the furnace and puff to eternity the fame of Dr. Rodgers. Everything being prepared, all there would be to do would be to put in charcoal, then the quartz on top, light the fire, put the fans in motion, then run off the gold in the bottom of the furnace, thus already smelted, into bars ready for coining. Some facetious wags suggested the propriety of attaching a mint to the works and coining the gold then and there to save the expense of transporting it to Philadelphia and back.

The process however proved a failure and was for that time and place a miniature South Sea bubble, for not only did capitalists, who generally subscribed to promote the enterprise, lose their entire investment but many a poor fellow lost his whole summer's wages besides being in debt for his board at $12.00 a week. Rigby and Rodgers, the manager and proprietor, were enabled through the handling of the stockholders' money to make themselves whole. In this respect they were indeed skillful "managers."

A San Francisco company started another crushing process at the head of Wood's Ravine under the management of one Colonel Doan. This also proved a failure at first, but I do not know how it turned out in the end. For the early history of quartz mining I think it was really a good plant. Colonel Doan had the regard and sympathy of all who knew him. Wood's Ravine took a good start at the beginning of the quartz excitement. Two large hotels or boarding-houses were built there, one by Beauclerc, James and Butch, the second by Mr. and Mrs. Coates.

We had long been tired of boarding ourselves and now boarded with Coates at $12.00 a week. Coates worked at mining and Mrs. Coates ran the boarding-house. He had been very successful in mining and had made considerable money and knew how to keep it. That faculty was so strong in him that it developed into very disagreeable penuriousness; besides he was the most jealous man I ever saw. No person could speak to his wife but his suspicions were aroused. She was an active, enterprising and industrious woman and popular for her kindness of heart and agreeable manners toward all. No more upright and honest woman ever came to California than Mrs. Coates. His jealousy was simply an outcome of constitutional meanness.

Seeing his miserable disposition toward the noble woman, some of the boys mischievously put their heads together to keep him constantly in hot water. He had occasion to go to Sacramento and for a change and rest she wanted to go with him, but he was too stingy to incur the increased expense and took her over to Rock Creek to visit Mrs. Scott while he was gone. The boys were determined to get Mrs. Coates back home just to torment her disagreeable lord and master, but of their purpose and scheme Mrs. Coates was perfectly innocent. They had a little girl and boy of seven and five years. Johnny was a bright little fellow and a pet of his mother and all her friends. Being put to their wit's end for a plausible excuse for sending for Mrs. Coates, they finally had to resort to the following scheme: There was an old quack doctor in the place, always full of whiskey, and they bribed him to give the boy just a gentle emetic and as it commenced to work they started a man off with two horses, riding one and leading the other for Mrs. Coates, and in less than an hour she was back again among us. Johnnie's emetic had worked to a charm and he was out at play. She was greatly relieved to find the dear boy in perfect health. Mrs. Coates remained at home until her husband's return.

THE OTHER HOUSE ran a store as well and James used to be on the road freighting to and from Sacramento. He had four-mule teams and, getting sick, hired me to go on two trips with his other man. The first trip I made, as we struck the Sacramento flats, a man passed me on horseback under full gallop, the other teamster being ahead of me an hour's distance. Not long afterwards I discovered something like a bit of red ribbon sticking up through the sand, apparently about five inches long. I stopped the mules, got off, and to my great surprise found it to be a bag of gold dust of about eight pounds in weight. I put it in the side box and went on.

Presently I saw the same man who had passed me about an hour before coming back. He asked the driver ahead of me if he had picked up anything. He told him he had not and of course I being so far in his rear, he did not know that I had. The man was very much excited and he confusedly asked me if I had picked up anything. I asked him what he had lost. He began to cry and said he had lost every cent he was worth.

"What was it?" said I.

"A bag of gold, all I am worth in the world except my horse and saddle," said he.

I went to the side box, took out the bag and asked him if it was it.

"Oh yes," said he and seizing hold of the bag of gold immediately rode off, not even so much as thanking me. I don't know whether the fellow was too ignorant to be civil or whether it was because he was so excited he did know what he was doing; I judge the latter, or at any rate I am willing to give him the benefit of the doubt.

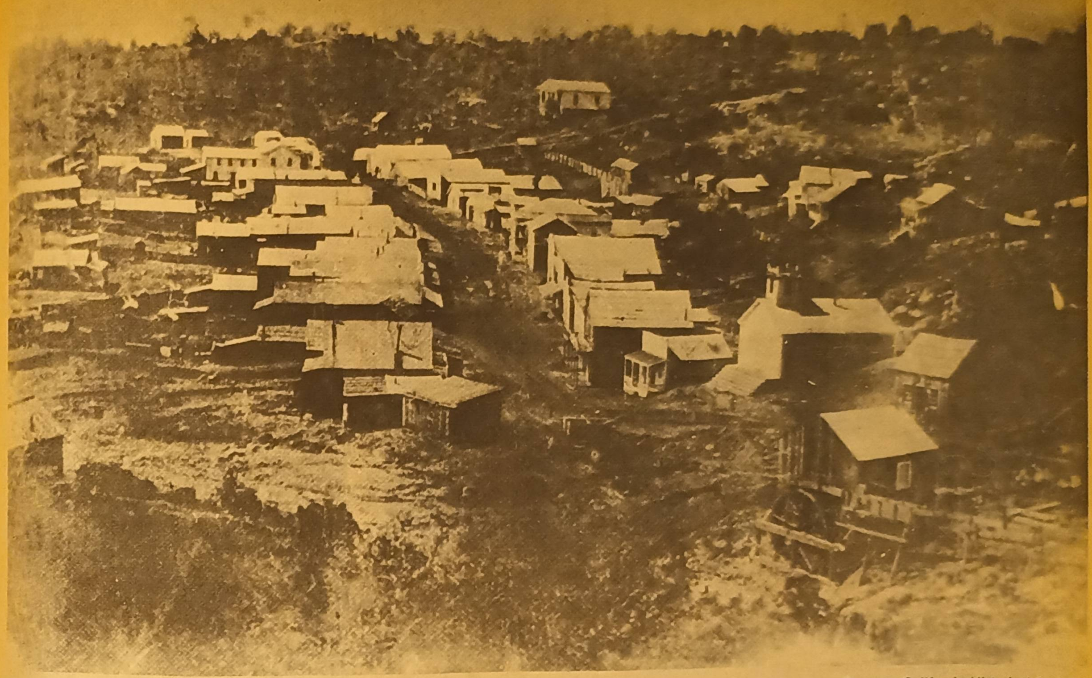
The next trip I had a little loss myself. I was so ashamed of it that I tried to keep it from the boys for they were always running me about my carelessness. Upon leaving the Quartzville hotel I stopped at Coates' to take on a box and a passenger who was going to town with me on his way home to the States. I helped him on and put his box in the wagon and started, not stopping until we reached Rough and Ready where we watered the mules and went in to water ourselves. I was humiliated when I found I had not a cent to pay the score with. I went out to the wagon but my coat was not there, neither did I have the slightest idea where it was. The other driver had money enough to pay the bill and so we went on and by the time we returned to Quartzville, which was some eight days later, I had forgotten that I had lost a coat.

While we were at supper some person spoke about someone having lost some gold and that put me in mind of my coat. I then inquired of the landlord if anyone had seen a coat I wore when I was there before. They all declared I wore it away; at any rate no one had seen it. After supper I went up to Mrs. Coates' and as no one had seen it there I gave it up as lost, but just then a little girl spoke up and said, "Johnnie was cutting the bottom off a coat he found in the road yesterday." We took a light and went into the little boy's room and sure enough there was my coat with all the buttons cut off. I put my hand into the side pocket and pulled out a purse containing about $300. It had lain in the road and men and teams had travelled over it for eight days until Johnny Coates picked it up to get the buttons and by that lucky circumstance my money was saved. I tried to keep it a secret but somehow the boys got hold of it and there was no end of the ribbing I had to submit to.

From teamster I found advancement in accepting the position of chief cook at the Quartzville Hotel where I remained for four months at a salary of $125 a month. As there was but one cook at that hotel I cannot be overstating the truth when I claim that I was chief. If possibly I am in error about my rank, I cannot possibly be wrong regarding my salary for it is indelibly stamped upon my memory that Messrs. Beauclerc & Co. never paid the same nor any part of $200 loaned them. I merely mention this trifle, thinking possibly it may have slipped their memory and that, should they still remain this side of Jordan and be reminded thereof by reading this book, they might be anxious to remit to me by draft. I shall be generously disposed to waive the matter of thirty years' interest and give a receipt in full for the original sum!

IT WAS in 1851, I think, when one morning in March we set out for the city and on our way were surprised to see burnt pieces of calico strewed along the road, and even burnt shingles. Arriving at Nevada City we found Main Street in ashes. The fire had broken out in Barker's gambling house and spread so rapidly that in less than twenty minutes the whole street was one sheet of flame and in an hour it was in ashes. Three of the finest buildings of the city were on this street. Scott's Empire, one of the most costly structures, had been opened but three nights when it was swooped up by the flames.

The very next day by ten o'clock one could hardly get through the street for the men and teams clearing away, unloading lumber and making ready for the new buildings, and in a few weeks a stranger coming to the city would hardly know there had been a fire. Such were the enterprising spirits Nevada City was made up of in the golden days of '51. However those that did not suffer by the fire contributed generously to those who lost their all and I don't know of a single instance where a man had lost even his last dollar but he could obtain credit to go right on and build up again. So we not only had enterprise in Nevada City but generosity combined. The same has been my experience in whatever part of the world I have been. Enterprise and liberality go hand in hand.



Courtesy California Historical Society

Rough and Ready in 1857, "a harder and more dismal place I never saw," Ferguson wrote. Here he witnessed the hanging of a convicted murderer, Indian Dick.

Considering there were no public laws in the territory until Nevada City was nearly two years old, I think one would have to travel far to find a more law-abiding people. There were but few cases tried before Judge Lynch, only three cases of shooting and those poor shots, only one man being killed; and only one case under the code of honor. The first shooting case occurred in Barker's gambling house although the quarrel had been elsewhere. The affair was between two doctors, rivals for notoriety if not practice also. As they met, one pulled out a pistol and told the other to draw. He threw up his hands and said he was not armed. Whereupon the first pulled out another and handed it to him and in less than half a minute the house was clear of people—all that could get out. I was one of the unfortunates who could not get out and took refuge behind the counter and a fifty-gallon beer barrel. It was a close-range struggle—pop, pop, and then a suspension for a few seconds. When I would stick my head up from behind the barrel to see if it was all over, it would be pop, pop, and down would go my head again behind the friendly beer cask. At last each had discharged his five shots and what seemed very remarkable, neither was hurt. After it was all over they shook hands and drank together at the bar. The whole affair was a farce. It was simply a case of two mentally diseased doctors administering to each other bread pills instead of good honest lead which would have cured both of them at that close range. The crowd had been only frightened, but for myself I never had any love for powder smoke under such circumstances, especially when I had reason to suppose there was a lead ball on top of the powder.

The next shooting case was that of Brown, a gambler, and Smith, a miner, which occurred in the Empire gambling house and grew out of a political dispute involving the abolition question. Smith used very abusive language which Brown put up with for a long time, but the more he forbore the more abuse Smith seemed disposed to heap upon him. Finally he told Smith to go away, whereupon Smith struck him.

Smith was a stalwart six-footer while Brown was a small man and no match for him. No sooner had he received the blow than he drew his pistol and fired, the ball going through Smith's lungs. He fell and bled profusely. Of course the cry went out that a gambler had shot a miner and ropes were immediately in the hands of the multitude, they demanding that the wretch be hanged though not yet knowing the circumstances. The cooler ones however came in time to get Brown out of the way of the excited crowd, called a court and jury and tried the case. The hearing of evidence occupied two hours after which the jury returned a verdict of self-defense and Brown was discharged. Smith had a pretty loud call but by virtue of a strong constitution he lived. He was proved to be the aggressor and the result was a lesson by which he profited by improved manners thereafter. Brown paid his doctor's bill and all his expenses while he was laid up. Such was the gambler's style of doing things in the early days.

The last case of shooting happened in Kiota Street the day of the first election. A man called Hayes, said to have come there from Cincinnati and having the reputation of being a very mean and quarrelsome person, had quarreled with a miner that morning over a pile of wash dirt and had threatened to shoot the miner the next time he met him. His character was so well known that everyone regarded him as very likely to keep his promise in this respect if in no other, for he was entirely destitute of principle. No little anxiety was felt for the miner, who was an old man and had a son about eighteen.

When the son heard of Hayes' threat against his father he walked into Bowers' express office, bought one of Colt's six-inch revolvers, loaded it without saying a word, and walked up Main Street. When he turned up Kiota Street he met Hayes and shot him in his tracks. There was of course another excitement but it only lasted a few minutes for as soon as anyone heard that it was Hayes who was killed, that was enough; the universal expression was, "Served him right." The boy had a trial that lasted only about an hour and the verdict was justifiable homicide.

THERE WAS comparatively little thieving in and about Nevada City for so many people—perhaps from twelve to fifteen thousand. The principal robbery was a matter of $3,000 stolen from Napper's bakery shop. After a little, his clerk was suspected and even-

Courtesy California State Library

A Negro working a Long Tom in Auburn Ravine, 1852.

tually acknowledged the theft. Two other young men had planned the robbery and the clerk had helped to carry it out. About half the money was recovered; the balance had been spent at the gambling table. The three were convicted and sentenced to receive thirty-five lashes each. Mr. Napper paid Butcher Bill $500 for administering the punishment. All felt the justice of the punishment—but everyone looked with contempt on a man who would whip another for pay. Had he volunteered to execute the law or had Mr. Napper himself laid the lashes, it would have been deemed the proper thing. But from that moment, Butcher Bill dropped to the lowest rung of the social ladder—even to that of the thieves themselves.

At Rough and Ready an Indian was hanged for the killing of a young man who was out looking for his uncle's horses. He had been found pierced with arrows and mangled with a tomahawk. No one witnessed it or knew the murderer so the tribe was applied to for the surrender of the guilty Indian. They demurred at first but were informed that if they did not comply the whole tribe would be held for murder. At last they promised to do so as soon as they could find him, for he had become frightened and had hid himself. In a few days they found him, brought him in, and surrendered him. Finding proof enough among the Indians themselves that he was guilty, hanging was next in order.

Loveland, Taft and myself went down to witness the execution. The tribe did not arrive with the culprit till evening so we had to lay over. In the meantime the authorities had another little judgment to execute upon a Chilean who had broken into a store and had been caught in the act and had been adjudged to receive a certain number of lashes. As there was now a territorial law, the culprit was in the care of the constable awaiting execution of the sentence—the expense of which would be a charge upon the county—so as a matter of economy while waiting for the murderer to be brought in, they thought it advisable to administer the lashes to the Chilean robber and save the county the expense.

The constable wanted to make his fees and declined to give up the prisoner so they kicked down the door and took him to a tree back of the jail and tied him. A doctor was present to decide how much the culprit could endure. A man was selected from the crowd to wield the lash. He bestowed twenty-five stripes when the doctor ordered a stop. The blows occupied about one minute. As the robber was untied he fainted and fell, and the doctor revived him with brandy and water. He was given twelve hours to leave the district with notice that if he returned he would be hanged.

The Indians arrived in town about dark with the prisoner, Indian Dick as he was called. He was well known in the town as a bad fellow and it proved that he had enticed the young man out under the pretense that he had seen the horses. What he killed him for was not very clear but most likely for some trifle the boy had that the redskin fancied. The trial began in the evening and lasted till morning. Boyer, the Indian agent, was appointed interpreter. Verdict "guilty."

The judge, who had been up all night, went to bed as soon as the case had been submitted to the jury. The prisoner was guarded by the murdered boy's uncle, a six-foot two-inch man who stood sentry with a rifle nearly as long as himself. When the verdict was brought in the judge was sent for to pronounce sentence. The uncle had been asked to go for the judge but he declined to leave the prisoner, saying his post was by the Indian and there he should remain as long as the prisoner lived, which was not much longer. Soon the messenger to the judge returned with the sentence in writing that Indian Dick was to be hanged by the neck until dead, but in his sleepy condition the judge omitted to mention any time or place of execution. Such a little technical matter was of the least consequence, for the crowd soon fixed the time and place. The time was instanter, the place the first tree.

The convict was then brought out; a dry goods box was placed under a limb of a tree with a barrel on it, upon which Dick was placed with his hands tied and his eyes blindfolded. By this time someone had climbed the tree and fastened the rope. The noose was adjusted to the murderer's neck and the next instant the barrel was knocked out and Dick was kicking right and left for they had forgotten to tie his legs. Some twenty Indians were witnesses to the performance, laughing and seeming to enjoy it. I was in hopes the Indian would attempt to escape as I wanted to see the old uncle drop him with that long rifle. I knew it would have done that old man's heart more good to have shot him than to have seen him hang. As soon as all was over the uncle turned and walked out of town without speaking a word. And now I will say right here that I would never witness the like again, either of flogging or hanging, for idle curiosity.

THE SINGLE DUEL with which Nevada City was credited as early as the spring of 1852, the time I left, was between Jim Lundy, son of the proprietor of Lundy's Lane, and Charles Dibble, an officer of the Pacific mail line steamers. Jim was a noted duelist, this being it was said his seventh duel. Dibble was a young man somewhat addicted to drink and, having been discharged from the Pacific mail service, he came to Nevada City where he got into some altercation with Lundy and challenged him. Lundy tried every means to prevent the meeting but to no avail. He was a dead shot and no coward.

The night before the meeting he shot the wick off a candle to convince Dibble of the danger he was liable to; but to no purpose. The meeting came off and Dibble was shot dead. One General Morehead acted as second for Dibble but the name of Lundy's second I have forgotten. The authorities took the matter up, arrested, tried and fined the surviving principal and the seconds.

There was another duel in Nevada City, but it was irregular and wholly outside the code of honor through the conduct of the seconds, so it does not count in the record for dead shooting. Two old Down-Easters from Maine were rival musical artists, one a fiddler, the other a vocalist, and both slightly addicted to drinking sprees. When in the spirit they could not harmonize. They were known as old Wentworth and Dan.

On one occasion Dan was sawing away at his cat-gut when Wentworth considered himself entitled to the floor for a song, and being disturbed thereby told Dan to stop that squealing thing. Dan felt insulted and demanded to know if he pretended his vocal ability to be equal to his instrumental skill. Words multiplied words till their passions were so thoroughly aroused nothing could wipe out the mutual insults but pistols and coffee—or rather whiskey.

A meeting was arranged; Hart and Hunter were seconds; weapons, pistols; time and place, immediately in the rear of the Quartz hotel. Before going Wentworth proposed to Dan to have one more drink together and said it was probably his last on earth. Dan assented, saying he knew very well which one was taking his last drink. The principals were then placed, each taking his stand as coolly as he ever stepped up to the bar for a drink. The pistols were handed them; the word was given and both fired. Wentworth fell covered with blood. Dan approached, looked upon his bleeding victim, and in maudlin utterances said: "Poor feller, he wa'n't f-fit to die."

This was too much for the bleeding and dying man and he suddenly revived and jumped up and demanded, "Who wa'n't fit to die?" He would let him, Dan, know he was fit to die although they had differed on theology.

Upon Dan's discovery that his antagonist was not dead or dying, he was greatly pleased; took him by the hand and rejoiced in the prospect of another drink together. The fact was, the seconds had loaded one pistol with powder only and the other with a cartridge of currant jelly—hence the blood.

AFTER the emigration of 1851 Nevada City was graced by the numerous presence of the fair sex, who lent a charm to the place we had never anticipated. The following winter was a season of gayety, no end of balls and social parties. In fact, the increased number of good families of wives and daughters greatly improved the social aspect of the town. The theatre greatly improved and became a popular place of amusement with a higher order of plays and actors. It was no longer the Nevada City of '49 and '50. Fireworks were displayed both magnificent and expensive and proved remunerative to the promoters of such entertainment although the price of admittance was only $3.00, barely the price of three pounds of flour to the early immigrant. Three thousand attended the first night and the audience did not diminish for several successive nights.

Mexican bullfighting was experimented in but was not patronized by the people from the States who found no pleasure in cruelty to animals, and it died out though much expense had been incurred in building a large amphitheatre. The modes of fighting are various; sometimes a man on foot, sometimes on horseback, and sometimes a Mexican woman will exhibit her prowess and skill.

Once while attending one of these barbarous Sunday exhibitions, someone tapped me on the shoulder. I turned to see who it was and judge of my surprise to find it Martin M. Costler, my old friend and companion who had crossed the Plains with John See and myself. I never was more surprised in my life, especially to meet him at a bullfight and there too on Sunday, for he was a very religious man when he left the States, and while crossing the Plains.

The gladness of our meeting was mutual. The only difficulty we ever had resulted from his efforts to correct my bad French, which I am sorry to say I sometimes expressed a little too emphatically when things went wrong. Of course he went home with me and we had a long talk, fought over again all our battles with the Indians and told each other all our adventures since we parted on Feather River two years before. He had been back to Long's Bar to find me, but hearing that See had gone home and not getting any tidings of me concluded I had gone with him. He had been to every diggings in the country in search of me. When we had parted two years before, he had gone to Sacramento to work at his trade. Then there came a rush for Redding's Bluffs and he went up there and then to some other place and so on till he had boxed the compass of all the diggings in the country, just stopping in one place long enough to make sufficient money to carry him to another. So it was with thousands who went to California, first and last; and so it is in every place, many are perpetually on the move.

THE INDIANS around Nevada were known as the South Yuba tribe and generally were very quiet. The only murder I heard of their committing was the one already related. They were rather hard at driving a bargain. If they bought anything they would pull out a little parcel of gold—about a pennyweight at

A small hydraulic mining operation in California.

Courtesy California Division of Beaches and Parks

first; tell them that was not enough, they would pull out as much more, which still not being enough they would say, "Got no more." Put the article back on the shelf, they would produce another parcel and if they then got the article they would stand around till they saw something else they wanted and then they would repeat the same haggling process. Only one of a dozen would trade at the same time; the others would look on and if one got the same article a little cheaper or for a little less quantity of gold, then there would be a great fuss to get the balance back. Their trade was hardly worth having; it was too much trouble to deal with them, the trouble of waiting on them being in excess of the value of their trade.

Some were very good help about a hotel or a boarding-house. I remember Jim at the Quartz hotel, a smart fellow who worked there four months, got himself a good suit of clothes, bought a cheap Mexican pony, saddle and bridle, and one day went down to Boyer's among his tribe to see his wives, as he said, but it was more to show his clothes and other evidences of his high civilized state and to gamble. They are inveterate gamblers. About twelve o'clock the next night I heard a noise at the back door, as of someone trying to get in and went and opened the door. There stood Jim without a stitch of clothes on. He had gambled away all—clothes, horse and one of his wives, for he had two. The Indians believe in a plurality of wives but two is generally the limit of such luxury, their financial resources not enabling them to attain unto the glories of Solomon.

Their mode of gambling is after this manner: Each takes a given number of sticks, a little longer than a common match, and sitting on the ground facing each other, one takes three of the sticks in his hand and commences to go through a variety of motions, changing the sticks at the same time, the other watching him. After a while he stops and the other guesses which hand they are in. If he guesses right he takes one of his opponent's sticks over to his pile; if wrong, he puts one of his over to the other's pile and so on until one or the other has won all of his opponent's sticks. This ends the game. The lucky Indian gets an increase of estate and often an extra wife. They get very excited in gambling and will seldom give up as long as they have anything to wager, even to their wives which last species of Indian property they affectionately reserve as the last thing to part with.

Jim had got cleaned out but came back satisfied. We got him an old suit of clothes and he went to work as if he had lost nothing, at least to all appearances though no one can tell whether an Indian is satisfied or not. They have what they call caroboreys or fandangoes—a dance and a feast; the latter is a kind of soup made of dried acorns pounded to a flour and then stirred in cold water. When prepared, all sit around and each dips his forefinger in and licks off the soup. The one who gets the most dips gets the most soup. It pleases them to have the whites join them in their finger-licking feast. The dancing is exclusively done by the men, ladies taking no part therein except as musicians. They sit off a little distance on the ground, some six or more composing the orchestra, each manipulating a sort of tambourine with two strings across it, with two beads on each string, which they beat with their fingers. At the same time they keep up a monotonous and dismal sort of song that makes a civilized man's flesh creep. The gentlemen's ballroom attire consists solely of a strip of calico fastened about the waist some nine or ten inches in length, and the dancers, usually about twenty in number, dance in a circle. Their steps and movements would not be considered by our ladies and masters of our dancing schools as very graceful, but I can testify that although they were barefooted, yet when they put their foot down one hears it, if not by the concussion then by the grunt the performer gives. They keep excellent time—that is, I thought so, not judging by the music but by the vibration of the ground for thirty feet around. This performance is kept up for about half an hour when the whole party becomes thoroughly exhausted and perspiration exudes from them as if a bucket of water had been dashed over them.

I never assisted at one of their funerals but I have seen them in their mourning costume. The women take the most conspicuous part in inducting the deceased into the happy hunting ground. After the burial the women gather balsam from the fire tree and daub their hair and face with it, the dirt of course adhering for they never wash themselves. After a day or two their appearance is very repulsive. I never looked upon one of those creatures but my very flesh crawled with a feeling of disgust. If the Oriental philosophy of the transmigration of souls is correct, I pray that my soul may animate the body of a bird or beast rather than that of a California Digger Indian, more especially one of the female branch.

THERE HAD BEEN great advancement in the method of saving gold in the short space of time, about two years, that I was in the country. At first the cradle was used altogether for washing the dirt and separating the gold therefrom and quartz crushing was then unknown. The first improvement was in using quicksilver which required a different cradle from that primitive one which I have before described. The quicksilver cradle was fixed upon rockers similar to the common gold cradle only on a larger scale and having a long drawer. The whole length of the drawer was divided into six or eight little compartments made perfectly tight so as to hold quicksilver which is the most difficult to hold of all liquid substances.

The screen on top runs the whole length of the rocker, punched with holes similar to the hopper of the early cradle. The quicksilver is placed in equal portions in each compartment of the drawer when the rocker is put in a slow rolling motion, the dirt having been put in at the upper end. A gentle but steady stream is kept constantly running in at the top where the dirt is put in, which gradually washes down and disappears through the sheet iron screen and falls among the quicksilver to which the gold adheres. The sand runs on with the water—the coarser matter passing off over the screen. This process was as short-lived as it was impractical except where the gold was in loose sand and as fine as flour.

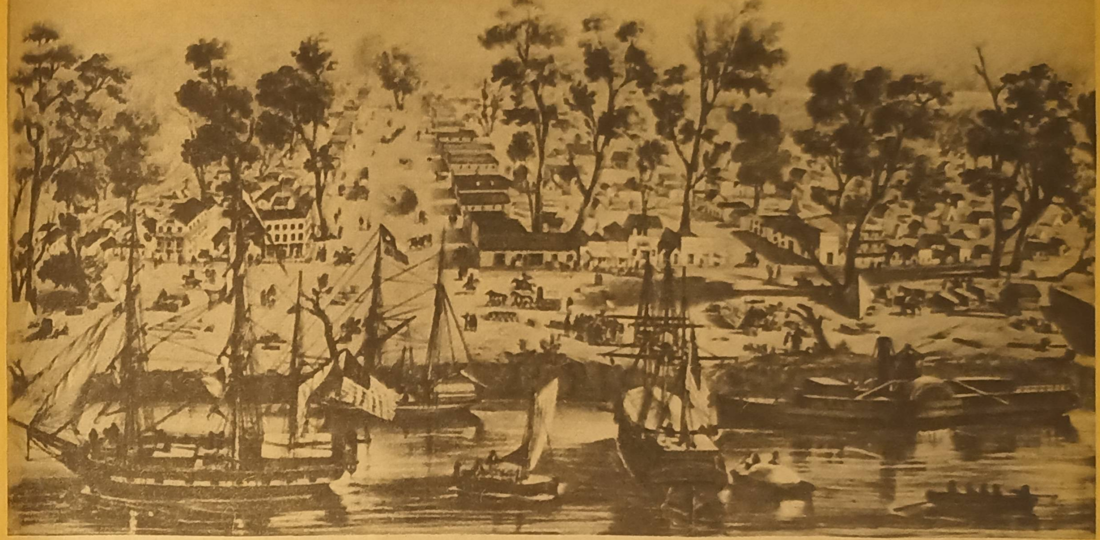
A doctor at Long's Bar on Feather River had a new-fangled machine made of zinc with partitions for the quicksilver as in the above described rocker which we concluded could be worked at less expense than the former. We procured a quantity of quicksilver at $10.00 a pound and commenced operations but had run it but a brief time when we discovered quicksilver running through the sand and escaping. We stopped to look, not knowing but what we had discovered a quicksilver mine and little thinking that ours had eaten a hole through the zinc and was all gone which proved to be the fact. Neither of us knew it would eat zinc. That put an end to our experiment with quicksilver after losing ten pounds and literally spoiling a rocker which had cost the doctor $40.00.

The next process that came into use was the Long Tom which I have heretofore described. It was equal to a full day's washing for two men, cleaning up in the evening with about a tin dishful of dirt to pan off, when the gold is all in the dish ready to dry and blow out the sand and put it in the gold bag. Two men could wash in a Long Tom some six loads of dirt in a day and it was a great improvement over the old rocker and would enable men to work diggings that yielded less gold to the load of dirt and pay even better than richer dirt by the old cradle process.

Then came in vogue the sluice-box. A long series of boxes, each some twelve feet long and one foot high and wide, fitted into each other and riffled on the bottom. Six men could shovel in all day while one man and a sluicing fork stirred up the dirt to keep it from packing and forked out the large stones and another at the end of the series of boxes shoveled away the tailing not already carried away by the water. This was deemed an improvement over the Tom. It was said that dirt that would pay one cent to the tin dishful would amount to half an ounce a day under this process.

Afterwards came the process of ground sluicing for surface dirt. A small ditch was cut on the side hill, just enough to make a course for the water which, as it ran down, would wash the ground and loosen the lumps. Men would remove the large stones with their shovels. No one who had not witnessed it would believe the amount of ground six men could wash in a day. It was estimated that dirt that was a good strong color to the tin dishful would pay one ounce a day per man. We seldom cleaned up ground sluices oftener than once a week. This was done by uniting the various sluices, making one considerable stream and placing boxes at the lower end to receive the entire week's wash which would be reduced to two or three dishfuls. This put the week's work of from six to eight men into a pretty small compass.

Lastly was the advent of hydraulic washing which required great force of water, the stronger the better, being run through hose. They would commence in the face of a hill, sometimes washing away the whole hill before cleaning up at it was called. Fortunes have been made by this method where the cradle and even the Long Tom men could not make a man's board. Before I left Nevada early in 1852 there was a great deal of hydraulic mining being done between there and Rough and Ready. In two years mining had made great advancement since the days of the primitive rocker.



Courtesy California State Library

Sacramento and her river namesake in December 1849, three years before the author's visit. The only vessel pictured not of United States origin is the sloop (against the bank left of center) which flies the flag of Chile.

IN THE SUMMER of 1851 typhoid fever broke out in Nevada City, proving fatal to many people. Dr. Gardner was himself a victim of the scourge. He was from Michigan and a young man, a good physician and much lamented as a friend. George Raymond of Hiram, Portage County, Ohio also died, besides a great many others whom I personally knew. So it was in '49; you know him, he sickens and dies, and no one knows whence he came. His friends never get tidings of his fate and not unlikely an aged mother is looking for his return even onto this day, still clinging to the hope that her boy, her youngest, who went to California in '49 or '50 will yet return to gladden her heart and receive her blessing. Many times have I been asked about an uncle—"My mother's brother who went to California in '49 and we never heard from afterwards." They would tell his name and describe his looks although the party giving the description was not born when the uncle left, but they had heard him described so many times by their mother or an aged grandmother that they really believed they knew how he looked. And a mother never gives up hope until she, poor soul, knows that her son is dead.

It was customary in the mining regions to go about on Sundays visiting one's neighbors or to town to see the sights, so that that day was generally the most stirring in the week. Loveland went to town to see a dentist, not knowing I had ever pulled a tooth. Taft stayed at home while I went to see Beauclerc who was a great friend of ours. He told me he had just received a letter from an uncle in Australia; that gold had been discovered there by a man from California by the name of Hargreaves. It was liable to become very rich diggings. I thought nothing more of it until I went home. Taft was cooking supper. I inquired for Loveland. "Oh," said he, "he is out stargazing." I went out and found him standing a little distance from the cabin, his face turned starward though I don't believe he was conscious of a star for his mind seemed elsewhere. I asked him for his thoughts.

He said Dr. Livermore, the dentist who was formerly from Sydney, told him that he had just received a letter from Australia advising him that gold had been found there in quantity and richness surpassing anything then discovered in California. I then told him about Beauclerc's letter.

"What do you say about our going?" said he.

"All right," said I, "if you will go, I will."

At that moment Taft called us to supper and when we went in we told Taft that we were going to Australia.

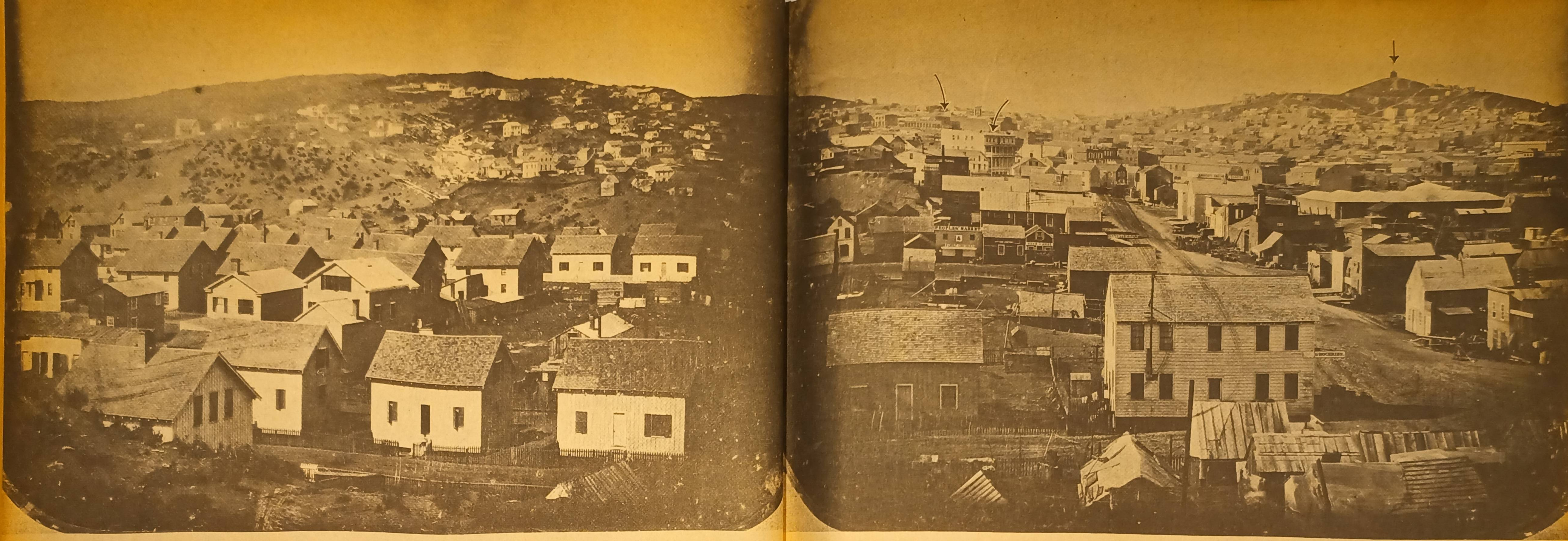
"All right," said he, "if you go, I will go with you."

We had not yet told him of the news but did so immediately. We then talked over the whole matter and finally the same evening all three of us started off to see Beauclerc. We found him as ourselves, but how to get away was a more difficult question. He had lately got married and it was out of question to take his wife with him on what might after all, be just a wild goose chase. We left him finally with our minds fully made up to go, but Beauclerc was to talk the matter over with his wife and determine what he would do.

Taft and I had Australia on the brain at fever heat. Loveland did not say much, but was like the Irishman's parrot, thinking. We expected him to talk soon and so he did. We sent Taft down to San Francisco to see about a ship. There was no more work to be done for we had suddenly discovered that our claim was worked out. Taft having gone, Loveland and I went about settling up our affairs. I had some money due me of which I collected a part and left the remainder of the claim with Hubbard & Hodge to collect and remit to my father and mother. They collected it promptly and paid it over to the person holding my father's order, but my father never received but $40.00 out of several hundred. My indignation has no limit when I contemplate the meanness of a man who will cheat an old father of the money sent him by his absent son to make his last days a little more comfortable. And I have sometimes thought that I could enjoy great exultation of spirit if I could be absolutely assured of a hell—at least a department in Dante's Inferno of about the temperature of a Turkish bath—fitted up expressly as the permanent residence in the spirit world of such as have wronged aged fathers and mothers. I have withheld the faithless man's name as I would avoid afflicting his family or relations but hope if he still lives and these few lines should chance to meet his eyes he may be conscious of the great wrong and hereafter work at repentance.

WE NOW GATHERED together our mining tools and what provisions and bedding we did not take with us, locked up the hut and went into town and stayed the first night to be in time for the early morning stage for Sacramento. We left the key of the hut with John Proctor to be given to the first Farmington boy that should come. Proctor had been home since I left him in Marysville but returned again to Nevada to go into the milk business.

The fare by coach to Sacramento, about seventy-five miles, was $16.00. All kinds of fevers are more or less contagious but I know of none that equals the gold fever. It is fatal even among old acclimated California miners. Loveland, Taft and myself were the first victims in Nevada City, but it spread rapidly and others were soon as bad as ourselves. Martin Costler, who was always ready



Booming San Francisco in 1852, the year Ferguson laid over there several weeks waiting for a ship to sail for Australia. In the foreground of both photos is Happy Valley, the workers' residential district Ferguson describes. The homes at left are prefabricated cottages shipped in from the East. Arrows opposite point (left to right) to Portsmouth Square, Oriental Hotel, and Telegraph Hill. The photo on page 90 completes the left half of a rare six-daguerreotype panorama of the town and bay photographed from atop a sand dune at First and Howard Streets. At left center above right, businesses are (from left) Peoples' Market & Family Groceries, Cottage Content, Ocean House, Happy Valley Market, and Happy Valley Bakery (behind Market).

Photos Courtesy California Historical Society

for a start for a new place was ready then and there; Chester Babbet and L. O. Hart from New York State; and Henry G. Nichols from Twinsburg, Ohio. George Scott of the Empire gambling house and his wife took the fever, which carried them off "between two days." George was one of the most forgiving men I ever knew. He said he freely forgave his creditors and hoped they would be equally considerate towards him.

Beauclerc had now made arrangements with Mr. and Mrs. Scott at Rock Creek to keep his wife, so in the course of a week there were eleven in all "carried off," including Loveland, Taft and myself.

We arrived in Sacramento the same day we left Nevada City. Even at that early day it was a city of some 10,000 inhabitants, handsomely laid out in square blocks, the streets running one way being indicated by numbers and the other was by letters. The buildings generally were rather of a temporary character, although some were very imposing. A great number on the back streets were of canvas. The city was situated near the junction of the American and Sacramento Rivers. There was a large amount of business transacted there as it was the principal outlet and depot to all the mountain towns and gold diggings. I met while there a man known to many in northern Ohio—David Brooks of Bristol, Trumbull County. He was in the auction business.

We only remained long enough to obtain the first steamer for San Francisco, where we arrived early the next morning and were not long in finding Taft who had been there some two or three days. He informed that there were two ships bound for Sydney, one the barque *Don Juan,* the other the ship *Constant,* but that neither would sail for two or three weeks. This was a great disappointment but there was no remedy —what could not be cured must be endured—so we took up our quarters at the Commercial Hotel, a very comfortable house on the Pacific Wharf. In a day or two all the others afflicted with the Australian epidemic arrived. While waiting for the ship the only thing we could do was to go about the city sightseeing.

SAN FRANCISCO contained at that time, 1852, a population of about 15,000. It had been twice completely destroyed by fire, but a stranger going into it as we did could not see a single sign of the destroying element. At least one-half of the city was built on piles and underneath houses and streets the tide ebbed and flowed. The two principal streets leading down to the bay were Long and Pacific, and Montgomery was the principle cross street running through the town. There were already some large fire-proof buildings upon the latter street, banking houses and express offices such as Adams & Co.; Page, Bacon & Co., in fact Montgomery was to San Francisco what Wall Street is to New York or Lombard Street is to London. Gambling palaces were plenty and of humbler or lower ones there was no end. Long Wharf was the chief quarters of high-toned aristocratic gamblers. Cutthroat and landshark gamblers were largely located on Pacific Wharf, and many poor fools were daily and nightly fleeced, in fact robbed of their money. Served them right, I say, for if a man has no more sense than to visit such places and allow himself to be duped by swindlers, he is not fit to have money. Those located along Pacific Wharf were not entitled to be designated as gamblers; they were simply cutthroats and thieves.

I will describe a game I witnessed up in the mines. It was easy enough for me to detect the cheat although only a boy; yet I have seen plenty of full-grown men who would take the bait. It is played with dice, three in number, and is called the ABC game. There are six letters on each die and sometimes all three letters turn up at the same time. If you have backed that letter the banker pays you three times the amount you have staked. To carry out the thieving principle the banker must have two accomplices. The banker sits at the middle of the table and throws the dice. One of his accomplices stands at a corner opposite, the second at the corner opposite the first and a little behind the banker. After the banker has thrown the dice the accomplice opposite produces a fifty-dollar gold piece or "slug" and wants change. The banker takes the gold piece and reaches over to count out the money and while doing so, accomplice number two pretends to lift the dice-box unbeknown to the banker, and if perchance there are three of a kind he takes good care to let all the others standing around see it. He at once puts all the money he has on the letter that was seen under the dice-box, and his example is followed by one of more dupes. Then the banker says, "Are you all down? Bet your money, gentlemen, this bank pays three to one."

When all have put down their money he lifts the box and to the disappointment of the dupes the dice have been turned and not a letter that had been seen before is in sight and the banker pockets their money. If they dare say a word in protest they are soon silenced. I don't wish to be understood that all games are conducted in this manner or that this style of gaming is necessarily a swindle for the ABC game fairly played is just as fair as any, though of course like all games the percentage is largely in the banker's favor. But the class of men who run this game were almost invariably swindlers and thieves. There were houses that would not tolerate swindling and were perfectly honorable in their dealings. Gambling was the pastime of the Pacific Coast, and there were not many but indulged therein to some extent, as businessmen now in all cities resort to billiards and other games for temporary relaxation. But the places where practices such as I have described were allowed were dens of thieves.

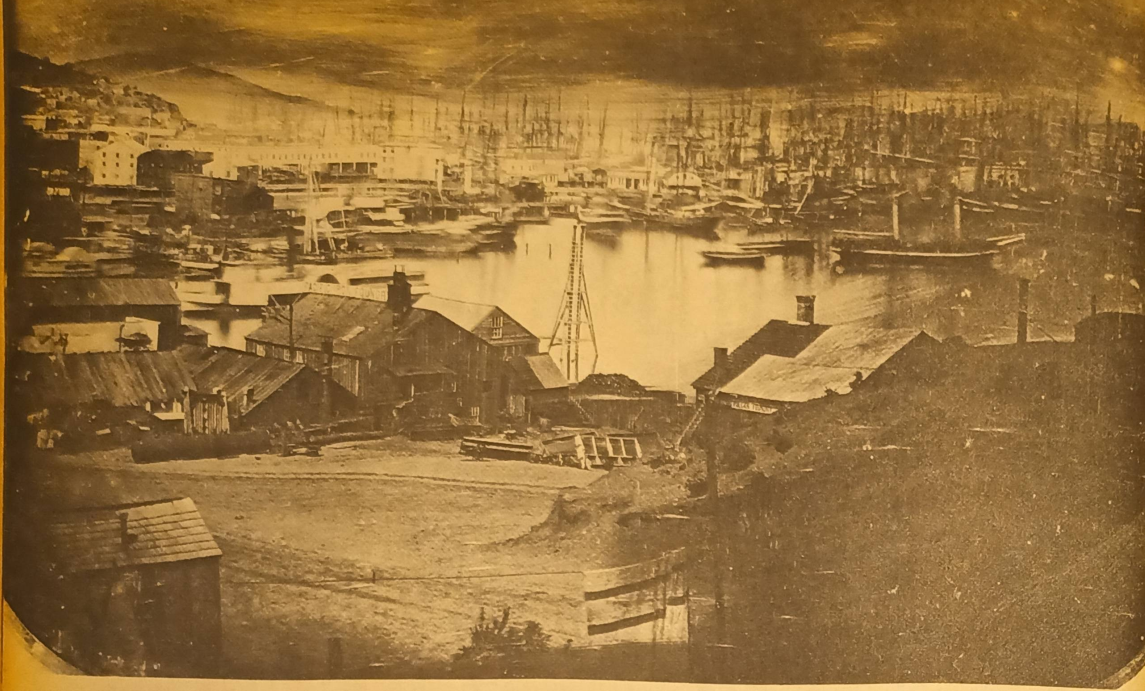
Southwest of the city was a chain of sand hills where a steam "paddy" was at work, which loaded a truck at every stroke. The sand was run down and filled into the bay, and now many acres of what was then the bay constitute as many acres of solid land covered with buildings of four, five and six stories in height. The sand removed to fill up the bay cleared away the great sand dunes, adding many acres of level land for the city's extension west, thus figuratively killing two birds with one stone. The rural surroundings of San Francisco I had no observation of at that time though the Happy Valley was supposed to be as charming even then as the famed valley of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia. It is some three miles on the road to the old Spanish Mission, which was established and the church erected some 200 years ago, as I was informed but cannot speak positively of my own knowledge as it was considerably before my day.

The vigilance committee was still in force but at the time they had very little to do. A short time before our arrival there had been a great excitement over the hanging of Whitaker, McKensie and Stuart. All three were convicts from Van Diemen's Land. The two first named were taken from jail and hanged for murder and robbery. The last named was caught in the attempt to make away with a small iron safe he had managed to remove from some office near the docks and had got it into a boat and was rowing across the bay where he was caught, though not before he threw the safe overboard. He was brought ashore and marched up to a warehouse, a rope was adjusted to his neck, and he was run up on a pulley by which goods were hoisted. Captain Wakeman superintended the brief ceremonies.

WHILE AWAITING our ship's sailing I made one trip across the bay to Contra Costa a distance of some ten miles, and went out into the country about three miles blackberrying. When I came back to the town of about a dozen houses I indulged in a dish of clam chowder, the first and probably the last I shall ever eat if it is all like the clam chowder of Contra Costa, which impressed upon my mind a lasting memory of the place. It was as obnoxious to my taste as the first glass of beer I ever drank.

One hot day I saw people stepping up to the bar and calling for a glass of beer. I saw the white foam and it looked very tempting and so I called for one. I had only tasted it when I would willingly have given a dollar if someone had stepped up and drunk it for me but I had called for it and was ashamed to leave it and so I had to worry it down.

At that time there were two lines of ocean steamers, the *Panama* and the *Central America.* While I was there the *Winfield Scott* came in on her first trip —the largest passenger steamer that had ever come around the Horn.



Courtesy California Historical Society

San Francisco Bay in 1852 choked with ships abandoned by gold seekers. The sand dune at lower right is approximately on the line of today's Market Street. Here Ferguson sailed for Australia the same year.

When Loveland and I first arrived in San Francisco and engaged lodgings in the hotel we were told that the house was full, but if we had no objections to another room-mate they could accommodate us—that he was one of the best of fellows. So we consented, provided the stranger would accept us. We were shown up and found that our roomer was not in so we washed and breakfasted and then went out about the city. When we returned we went to our room. We found it full.

Upon coming in our future mate introduced himself and the rest of the company as his friends. He appeared to be very much of a gentleman and played the violin like Ole Bull which was enough to make us take to him at once. His name was James Hull, second officer of the Pacific mail steamer *Oregon*, which was then undergoing repairs at Benecia. The others were officers of other steamers then in port either just arrived or about to leave. One was Darius Pollock, a rather young man to hold the office of second engineer, I thought, especially when I listened to his rattling conversation. I remarked the same to Hull who told me I would change my mind when I knew him better and particularly if I should once see him on duty. He told me how Pollock came by his early promotion.

He was coming up from Panama and Captain Knight, the head man of the Pacific mail line of steamers, was on board. A little girl playing on the hurricane deck fell overboard, the steamer being under full way some ten miles an hour. Pollock saw the child fall and in an instant he was over after her, striking the water almost as soon as the child did. They both went down out of sight and those on board who witnessed the scene thought they would rise no more so long were they under the water. Presently however he appeared holding up the little girl with one hand and striking out for the steamer with the other. It was stopped as soon as possible, boats were lowered, and they were both picked up and soon safe on board, the little girl only the worse for the wetting. Pollock immediately went down into the engine room as if nothing had happened.

A purse was soon raised by the passengers to present to him as a testimonial of their gratitude for his heroic deed. He was called up to receive the purse but to their surprise he declined it saying he had only done his duty—that it was the duty of all men to save a life when they had the opportunity. Upon that Captain Knight stepped forward and complimented him upon having done his duty so nobly and so well and said that he (Knight) also had a duty to perform, and then and there publicly promoted him to the position of second engineer.

Pollock was a fearless man and sometimes a little reckless but withal a good-hearted fellow. One day I rode out with him and some of the other boys to Happy Valley, and on our return rather late in the evening Pollock took a notion to call at the house of an acquaintance and rouse him out of bed. The door being locked he commenced to rattle away at the latch to awaken his friend. Suddenly a head appeared at the upper window and demanded to know who was there. Pollock did not answer but rattled still more at the latch. "Go away," said the man at the window, "or I will shoot"—at the same time presenting a pistol—one of Allen's six-barrel pepper-boxes as they were called and good for shooting around corners—and commenced to pop away at Pollock who stood all the while with one arm akimbo saying, "Look out, be careful with that d - - d thing; you might hit somebody!" His voice and peculiarity of expression disclosed who he was and the friend came down, unlocked the door and let us all in. The affair was considered a joke, none of the party seeming to consider the danger of such careless shooting.

THERE WAS ONE Frank Beaubien whom we met in 'Frisco that some people alive and still sailing on the lakes may remember as commander of the Canadian steamer *London*. He was first mate of the mail steamer *Oregon*. I afterwards met a cousin of his in Australia. Benecia was the place up the bay where steamers underwent repairs, consequently it was a great rendezvous for the officers and crews when laid up. A party of us went up there one day among whom was one Charlie Taylor. In the course of the evening Charlie imbibed so freely that the boys had to put him to bed; but before leaving him they took all his clothes, even to his shirt. When he awoke in the morning he found his clothes gone. The others were at breakfast expecting every moment to be sent for by Charlie. Presently there was a commotion on the stair and a jingling of a pair of Mexican spurs. And the waiters were barring his way telling him he could not come down in that condition. Looking in to see what was the matter, there stood Charlie in full costume of nature decorated with a pair of Mexican spurs and a shirt collar. His clothes were brought forth and peace was restored between Charlie and the waiters.

The whole three weeks we were waiting in 'Frisco our room was full of cheerful and friendly persons, which was a great benefit to us who were having to kill time. Always ready to show us every civility and attention, they were gentlemanly in manners, young and full of fun and able and willing to bear their proportion of expenses. We were enabled through them to see and know more of the city than otherwise we could have seen and known, as they knew all the ropes, as the saying is, and would let no stranger in their company be imposed upon.

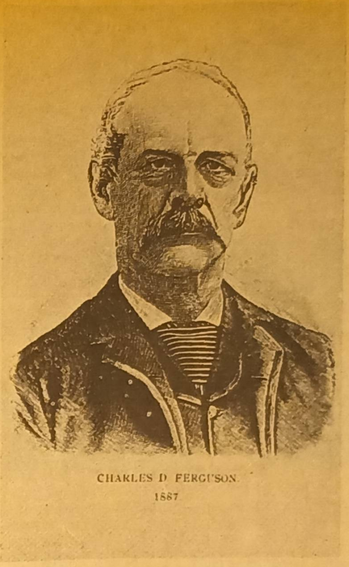
Time was drawing near for our departure and we all had decided to take the *Don Juan*, a barque of some 300 tons register. She had been laid up in the bay over two years, having like many other vessels in the early days of the gold rush to California been deserted by the whole crew and never able to put to sea again. The *Don Juan* had been purchased by Smith & Son and laid on for the Australian passenger trade. The fare was $60.

The captain who was to have sailed her was Tucker, but upon pulling out into the stream his creditors remembered him with such depth of feeling that like Pharoah their hearts were hardened and they would not "let him go." They got out an attachment for his body and the consequence was that after being ready to sail, our barque had no captain. After some delay Captain John Sears took command. He was a young man of about twenty-two years, every way competent to assume the responsibilities of any ship that ever sailed the Pacific Ocean.

Before leaving Nevada City, we had had letters from home telling us some more Farmington boys had started for California and that we might expect them on the arrival of the steamer *North America*. Word came to 'Frisco that the steamer had been wrecked down on the coast off Acapulco and the sailing ship *Northern Light* was sent down there to pick up the passengers. We had been on the lookout for days hoping to see the boys before we sailed and while we were anchored in the bay, waiting for our new captain, the *Northern Light* came inside the Golden Gate, passed us, and dropped anchor.

This put Loveland, Taft and myself into great excitement to see the boys from home. Upon inquiry we found our ship would not sail till five o'clock the next morning and that we could go if we were sure to be aboard again by that time. So we got a boat and went ashore and to make sure of our return in time hired the boatman to stop for us all the while so there would be no default of reaching our ship in time. We had not gone 200 yards up the wharf when I heard a voice say, "There is Charlie Ferguson. I know him." Sure enough, there were three of the boys from home, schoolmates with whom I had played, swam Grand River, and exchanged work when our fathers had set us some little task to do which we thought could not be done alone. And now here on Pacific Wharf in California after years of absence and wandering, I met Milo Griffith, one of the boys, and all my boyhood recollections were revived. I was delighted to see them all and our feelings were mutual.

Shipwrecked, they had been compelled to stay in Acapulco until their money was all gone and had now been landed here with neither money nor friends, as they supposed until they unexpectedly ran across us. They had two others with them, strangers to us, who were in the same predicament as our friends and of course had to be provided for; an old California miner never makes flesh of one and fish of another when the necessities of life are wanted. We gave the boys enough to pay their expenses up to the hut, told them to go to John Proctor for the key, take possession and if they liked they could go into our claim and make wages, which since my return they have told me they did. We of course were up with them all night until about three o'clock when we parted. By this time our boatman had begun to show signs of weariness and so we entered the boat and pulled for the *Don Juan* and were on deck a few minutes before she weighed anchor.



CHARLES D FERGUSON

1887

Soon we were outside the Golden Gate, myself little thinking that thirty-one years would roll around before I should again set foot upon American soil; that before my return the goddess of history would multiply her pages in recording the rise and fall of empires, the crumbling of thrones, the oscillation of France and Spain between a monarchy and a republic, the unification of Italy, a civil war in the United States and the emancipation of the slaves, the Suez Canal, the German Empire, the rediscovery of the sources of the Nile, the Pacific Railway, the electric light and the telephone —wondrous events of a single generation.

I HAVE HEARD many people speak of their trials and tribulations aboard-ship but the boat I shipped in from San Francisco to Sydney could take the cake from them all. After 109 days beating about the Pacific ocean we arrived in Sydney. There we found we had to ship to Melbourne to reach the mines. On arriving at Melbourne we had to walk with our blankets on our back 100 miles to Bendigo. Here the first thing we did was to take out a license for which we had to pay thirty shillings per month, English currency ($7.50 in American money).

I remained in the American colony for thirty years and during that time I was engaged in mining; driving stagecoaches for the American firm of Cobb & Co.; was foreman for the Victorian Exploration Company; purchasing agent for the English government, securing horses to be used in India during the time of the Sepoy rebellion of 1855 and 1856; and various other enterprises.

I was a member of the Bourk & Wills exploring expedition to the interior of Australia in 1860. There were twenty-six men and officers and six sepoys in the company. We had twenty-six head of camels and twenty-five head of horses. At the end of sixteen months in the interior, I was the only survivor to return to Melbourne, all the rest, including horses and camels, either had died from exhaustion, scurvy or other sickness. In the case of the camels and horses, many of them wandered away never to be seen again.

And during all these years I was always interested in mining, at which I was fairly successful.

From the year I landed in Australia up to 1862 I received at intervals letters from home, but after that date I never received another until some time in 1881 although I had written as usual, yet without receiving any answer. Letters from home having ceased to come, I wrote to almost everyone I had known in my boyhood but to no purpose. At last I suspended further efforts in the matter, not without a feeling of inexpressible sadness yet making a sort of half mental resolve that if they had forgotten or so far lost interest in me as not to take the trouble to write me even in answer to my letters, I could do as long without hearing from home and old friends as they could without hearing from me. Then I wrote no more for eighteen years and neither party heard from the other. I had given up all hope of ever hearing from them and supposed that they had come to the conclusion that I was dead.

One evening I called on a gentleman, an intimate friend connected with the public schools and he handed me a letter addressed to C. D. Ferguson, saying he had instructions that if it was not for me to return it to F. B. Clapp, Melbourne. I told him that it was for me and from an only surviving sister in Cleveland, Ohio. The letter informed me that my friends had for years given me up for dead, never having heard from me for so long a time; that then recently, by chance, a person had been met in Cleveland who had once been in Australia and knew me there but supposed I had left for the States years before. But he told them to write to New Zealand to Cole, Hoyt, Cobb & Company, coachers, and the firm would likely know my whereabouts if I were alive. My sister wrote the firm but they had sold out and Mr. Cole had returned to the United States. However, Mr. Robert Mitchel, who was then proprietor, answered, telling her that I had not been in New Zealand for years but he thought I was still in Victoria and a letter addressed to F. B. Clapp would most likely find me.

She did as directed with the result I have already mentioned. I was not surprised though deeply saddened to learn that not only my father and mother had passed over but most of my brothers and sisters had followed them. Nevertheless, I was pleased to hear once more from home and, as it were, from beyond the grave. I answered that letter with the utmost promptness and in due time I was rewarded with two or three replies—one of them informing me that a nephew, who had not been born till fourteen years after I left home, was coming to Australia to see his uncle Charlie; and sure enough he came according to the information—the first of my kindred that I had met in thirty-four years—since I was a boy of seventeen.

I was glad to see him and I would have rejoiced at any time to have met anyone from the Western Reserve. My nephew was received with open arms by my Australian friends, no less than by me. An Irishman was at the office when the telegram came informing me of my nephew's arrival in Melbourne. He undertook to bring me the dispatch but he called at so many places on the road over to inform them of the news and to celebrate the event with another drink that at last he forgot about the telegram and came to me twenty-four hours later to know if I had received it. Upon being told that I had not, "Now then, be jabers, I must have lost it; but niver mind," said he, "as he has come so far already he won't turn back now without seeing you so there won't be much harm done."

Of course I endeavored to post my nephew in the mysteries of Australia and was pleased to find that he would be likely to make quite as apt a scholar as his venerable uncle. There were not many places in Australia he did not see and not many of my acquaintances that he was not introduced to and they declared him a facsimile of his uncle.

I THINK this was the first time in my life that I felt thoroughly homesick and to cap the climax I received a letter from my sister in answer to one I had written her in which I had said I thought I should never return to America; that I had settled down and was now growing old; that Australia was my adopted home and there I would be likely to spend the remainder of my days. She wrote in reply that she had always hoped to see me once more; how disappointed she was; and at the close bade me final farewell in this world and hoped to meet me in the next where partings never come.

Now according to the old orthodox theory there are two distinct countries in the hereafter to which weary pilgrims of this world are said to be traveling, and having been so long separated and so far away from my sister and not being sure that the track I had taken would lead me to to her celestial abode, I concluded I would go home and ascertain the track she was on and the route she was taking, that we might mutually consider and determine in our minds touching the probabilities of a near neighborly existence in the world of spirits. Upon finishing the letter I said to some friends present, "I am going to America."

"Going where?" said three or four at once.

"To America," I answered.

"Oh, yes, we see you going; you have been going so many times."

"But I am going this time," said I.

"We will believe it when we see you start."

"Well, that will be soon," I said.

I got onto my horse and went to Barnesdale and began to make arrangements for being absent for some time. This was no uncommon thing for me and not much notice was taken of it until someone asked where Ferguson was going this time. On being informed no one would believe me. I had made three attempts before and failed. This time I was determined to go or give it up forever.

This was on Tuesday and on Friday I left for Melbourne. My friends there were equally surprised but thought, as did the rest, I would get no farther than Sydney. However they concluded to see me off in the usual way—the Scotch way—parting glasses. The consequence was my friends became so nearsighted they never noticed that I went upon one train one way and my luggage upon another train in an opposite direction. In fact I was so overcome with my feelings that I did not find out the mistake until reaching Albura where I was obliged to lay over for two days for the railroad officials to look up my luggage. From there I took the rail to Sydney, arriving there some ten days before the steamer sailed.

I availed myself of the opportunity to look around the city and contemplate the changes that had taken place since the day I first set foot upon the Australian shore. Progress, improvement, wealth and social institutions were manifest everywhere in the colony of which Sydney is the capital city. Upon my arrival thirty years before its population was only about 50,000 while now the census credits it with some 250,000. Melbourne was now as large as Sydney while it boasted of but 25,000 when I first landed there; besides there are more than twenty cities whose population is counted from 20,000 to 60,000, many of which had no existence when I came and "the sound of the church-going bell" had never floated on the air.

A line of splendid ocean steamers was now plying monthly between Sydney and San Francisco. Upon one of these I secured cabin passage to 'Frisco, the price being $210—the *Zealandria;* Captain Webber. I cannot this moment recall the name of the first officer. The second was William C. Tyler; purser, McDonald. It is a pleasure to record the kindness, civility and gentlemanly bearing of the commander and officers of the noble steamship *Zealandria* and a more pleasant and agreeable multitude of passengers never paced the deck or graced the salons of an ocean steamer.

ON THE 16th of June, 1883, the steamer sailed. Had I remained about a month longer I should have completed just thirty-one years' residence in the colonies. Those who have read Byron's *Lisbon Packet* will need no description of the getting ready of a ship and the embarking. That tells the true story of the outset of every voyage. It is a poetic photograph.

I think I never felt so downcast, gloomy and sad in all my life as upon that afternoon when we sailed out of Port Jackson Bay. I was leaving all my acquaintances of the last thirty years. To be sure I was returning to my native land but I had been so long gone from it I felt I was going among strangers where none would remember me, even in the place where I was born; where in my youth I had many friends, but all now perhaps were in the silent land or scattered abroad on the earth. Then too for an uncertainty of recognition in the vicinity of my old home or of meeting either with kin or girl or boy with whom I conned the primary lessons in the humble little schoolhouse, I was leaving all the friends of my mature life, acquired by long residence in my adopted country. Only one pleasing reflection came to cheer my gloomy spirit and that was that I was not leaving a single enemy.

There were 160 cabin passengers, most of them on their way to England, many upon a return visit to their native home and childhood scenes; others born in the colonies, now upon a visit to the land of their fathers; some to finish their education, others for pleasure.

There was a gentleman and his wife among the passengers, Dr. Tucker who was commissioned by the Australian government to examine and report upon the insane institutions of Europe and America. He was expecting to be absent some three years. We called at Auckland, New Zealand for the mail. I thought I would go ashore and sleep for the night, little thinking of meeting anyone I had ever met before.

I went to a first class hotel for my lodging. The landlord turned the register around and as soon as he saw the name he said, "I don't know you but I heard one of the same name talked about much only last night." I asked the party who he was.

He said, "Will Carter and Harry Richmond."

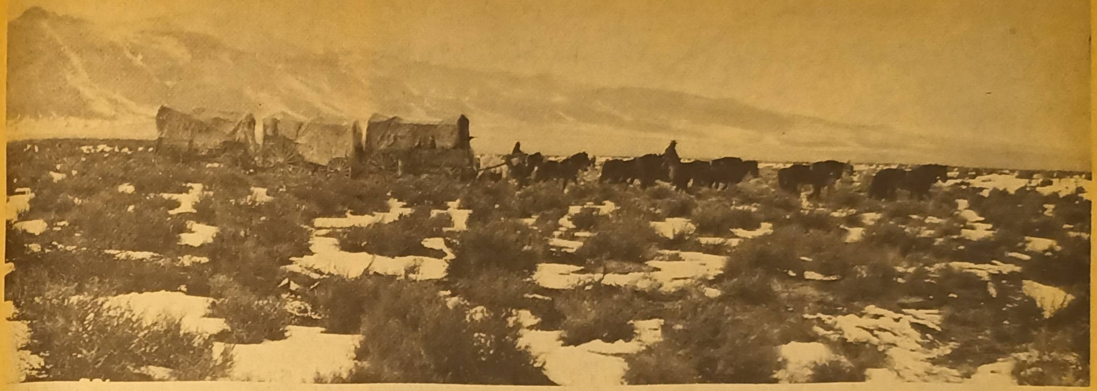
"Where are they?" I asked.

"I can take you to Harry in two minutes," said he.

I need hardly say that I availed myself of his suggestion. Before starting the landlord gave me back my money, saying that if I got with Harry I would not return there for the night. Richmond was the one who had started me when I first entered Gabriel's Gully some eighteen years before. I found him and think I can justly say he was equally rejoiced to see me as I was to see him. We did not retire that night, as the ship was to sail early the next day and we had eighteen years of notes to overhaul and compare, which took us all night. Carter had gone up the country that morning and I did not see him. He had gone with me to New Zealand on the first trip and had remained there. He was a Canadian from near Montreal and one of the best-natured and jolliest fellows that ever lived. He was a stalwart fellow, six feet and one inch, always laughing, and had a heart just a little bigger than a bullock's.

We had quite a group of passengers from Auckland. Among all, however, there was only myself and one other American on the steamer who had been out in the colonies for any length of time. From Auckland to Honolulu we were about eleven days. Here we called for twenty-four hours and in that time took aboard over 800 tons of sugar and other products of the Sandwich Islands for the 'Frisco market. The trip from there to San Francisco occupied eleven days more, making in all twenty-three days sailing and two days in port and I think I can truly say I never spent the same length of time more pleasantly. I did not fail to appreciate the contrast between the magnificent *Zealandria,* its officers and passengers, and the leaky and unseaworthy old tub, *Don Juan,* its motley conglomeration of disagreeable passengers and Van Diemen convicts, and the misery and suffering endured in the outward voyage of thirty years before.

HONOLULU is quite a stirring business city. The people are about equally divided, Americans and all other nationalities mixed. If there is any preponderance it is on the side of the Americans. There is always a multitude of kanaka or native women gathered upon the wharf when a ship comes in, peddling their wares and trinkets, principally consisting of little beads strung and worked into baskets, neckties and tassels—of no use—mere novelties. They usually drive a pretty profitable trade among the passengers of the great steamers that arrive in port.



Courtesy George Garver

The Nevada desert Ferguson crossed on horseback in 1850 proved safer by Pullman car in 1883.

One would think that a journey at sea extending nearly around the globe would become monotonous and tiresome but it was not so with me and did not seem to be so with the others for we had the best of officers and every luxury one could expect at sea and moreover as agreeable a class of passengers as one could desire. There was never a day but some entertainment was devised to lessen the monotony of the journey.

There was scarcely an evening but some entertainment was in progress in the cabin—Shakesperian readings one night, dancing the next, theatricals the third, lectures the fourth and so on—something continually. There was a Mr. Ballard and his daughter. The young lady was very seasick. The father was a kind but thoughtless man and often left the poor girl to care for herself. I pitied her and sometimes would sit down by her under the awning and read to her and at other times tell her Indian stories, not thinking anyone else aboard the ship was listening to them. One evening there had been an attempt at readings which for some cause proved a failure, when to my surprise I was called upon to give the company an account of my adventures among the Indians. I was taken wholly by surprise for I did not know there was anyone but little Miss Ballard who knew I had ever seen an Indian. I begged to be excused but it was of no use, I had to hold forth. I had however, the usual sore throat and bad cold of an operatic prima-donna when she discovers that the receipts at the ticket office are not up to her expectations, but I promised if they would let me off that evening I would appear before the curtain some other night when free of my unhappy malady.

The next day I noticed an unusual amount of inquiry among the lady passengers regarding my health but never mistrusted the reason of their anxiety until evening when I was visited by a deputation of ladies sent to escort me to the cabin to fulfill my promised engagement. Remonstrances were unavailing so I submitted as meekly as a lamb led to the slaughter and they rung up the curtain. The first evening I gave them an hour's rehearsal of events from my leaving Ohio, taking my audience with me in imagination across the mountains, deserts and plains, and landing them in California. The next evening I took them through the mining camps, over the bars, through the streams, into the gulches, over the divides, rocked the cradle and "panned out" for their entertainment as well as I could, took them across the Pacific Ocean and landed them safely in Sydney. The third evening I gave them the Ballarat war, the exploring expedition, the gold fields, and something of many other events and personal experiences in Australia. They complimented me by declaring that I was the legitimate successor of Marco Polo and Sir John Mandeville and congratulated me on my happy return to my native land and the scene of my childhood after the lapse of a full and complete generation of time.

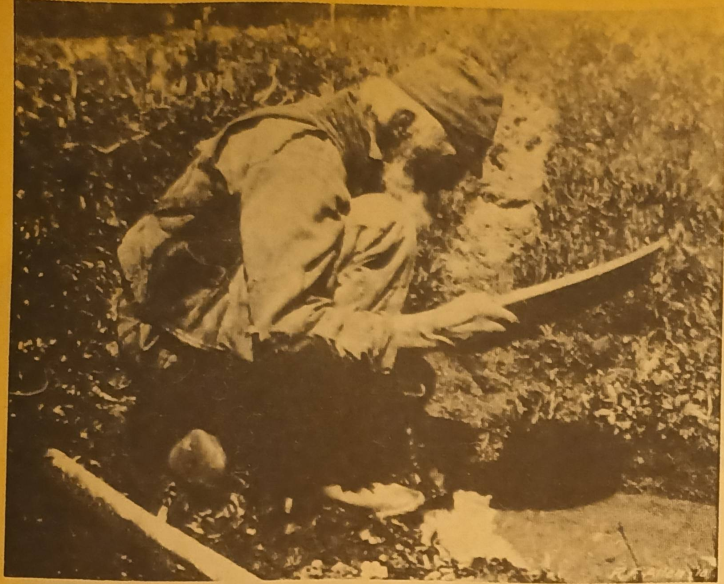
IT HAD BEEN a pleasant and excitable daily diversion to get up what was called a "sweep," an estimate or guess on the distance the ship would make. This occupied the fore part of the day when the captain would adjust his astronomical instruments for an observation and then would make his mathematical calculations and the officer would post up the result for the inspection of the passengers. In this little game of guessing my usual good luck followed me for I don't think there was a passenger that won more pools than I did. The Fourth of July came around and, although an English ship sailing under the colors of Her Majesty's government, the captain set up the champagne and the Queen and the President, England and the United States were toasted, and many loyal, patriotic, complimentary and friendly speeches were made.

There was one missionary among the passengers, a Mr. Taylor from Chardon, Geauga County, Ohio who had been out some three years to the Nelson Islands, had buried his wife there and was now taking his three little children home, the oldest about five years and the youngest only about nine months and he performed the office of mother to the little ones most affectionately and wonderfully well.

At last, on the eleventh day of July, we entered the Golden Gate Heads, between which I sailed out into the broad Pacific thirty-one years before. Oh, how little did I think there would or could be so many and such wonderful changes in San Francisco! They were beyond contemplation or the imagination to picture.

I took rooms at the Palace Hotel, built upon the very ground where I once knew only a mountain of sand. It was almost impossible to recognize any of the old places, only a small portion of Montgomery Street. I looked for a long time before I could make out Pacific and Long Wharves but at last found them. Upon the arrival of the *Zealandria* the purser told the reporters of the return of the old Forty-niner and it was not long before my table was covered with reporters' notes asking when they could have an interview. But I was not made that way; I had started for home, was bound to hasten there, had nothing to report and did not wish to be interviewed.

While wandering amazed and bewildered in the streets of the magnificent city, finding but a few recognizable points, my mind reverted to the times and scenes of a former generation and pondered upon some well-remembered names who helped to lay the foundation of that goodly city and the Golden State of the Pacific Coast. The vigilance committee, where were they? All or nearly all had passed away. Where were the statesmen who had been instrumental in raising the territory into the most fascinating state over which floats the emblem of our nationality! Fremont, its pioneer, pathfinder and first senator still lives and his last breath is destined to float



Courtesy Bancroft Library

A Forty-niner pans for color at his small ground sluice.

on the genial and balmy air of the state which he did most to make known to his country and the world. His able but less loved and remembered colleague, Senator Gwin, long since ended his ambitious career in the grave. Broaderick had fallen in a duel. Landor had died upon the field of battle in the Civil War. McDougal, the admired, the honored and deplored, had found a grave in his native state of New York. The brilliant lawyer and popular gentleman, Elisha H. Allen, had emigrated to the Sandwich Islands, had become chancellor and prime minister of the kingdom, returned as ambassador to the United States and died at Washington. The famous Colonel Jack Hays of the Texas Rangers was here elected sheriff in 1850, the first under the state constitution; Colonel Bryant, owner of the Bryant House on Ward Street being the opposing candidate.

Andrew Sublette, whose name is given to the "Cut-off" mentioned by all travelers across the Plains and linked with those of Bridger and Walker, had long since passed away with all his contemporary pioneers. Thomas Butler King was early on the ground with bright political hopes and prospects which he never lived to realize. Thomas Star King, the beloved and accomplished Unitarian clergyman ministered there, and there I think he entered upon his final rest. Last but not least there flitted across my mind the memory of one far more interesting and beloved than the memory of statesmen and politicians—Frances B. Osgood whose sweet poems in early years graced the pages of school books. Her husband was, I think, a clergyman—herself an invalid and she came there to die. When her attendant for the last time smoothed her beautiful locks and placed a new white cap upon her head, her husband was called to her bedside. Her hands were delicately white and her face had an unearthly paleness but her eyes were bright. She drew her husband's face close to hers and faintly whispered her last sweet poem in his ear—"I've something sweet to tell you"—the burden of which was expressed in the last line of each of the four stanzas—"I love you"—then sank upon her pillow and died.

SO PLEASANT had been the voyage of the *Zealandria* and so agreeable and social its passengers I had never felt any impatience about getting home since leaving Sydney until we entered the beautiful bay of San Francisco. Then it seemed to me I could not wait to get my luggage through the custom-house. Before leaving I had some twenty-four hours' spare time which I spent in taking a view of the city, having in the meantime purchased my ticket by rail through to Cleveland, Ohio.

Years before we crossed the bay to what is now the city of Oakland in something like a whale-boat but now the ferryboat is like unto a floating city. At Oakland I boarded the Union Pacific train. Again I was taken aback with wonder at Benecia Bay to see the whole train of twenty cars and two locomotives deliberately run onto a ferryboat and pushed for the opposite shore at the rate of ten miles an hour.

Early the next morning I was taking in the mountain scenery. We breakfasted at Truckee. My interest in scenery, however, was not very lively, as I had long been surfeited with nature's grandeurs both here and elsewhere, and I little expected that the road had been laid over part of the route over which I had toiled and suffered long years before. I was sitting and gazing out of the car window when suddenly there was presented before me a scene perfectly familiar. I jumped to my feet and went to the conductor and asked him if that was the Humboldt Sink. He said it was.

I knew it at once. There lay before me in full view the hills and the track we had taken that night when our party had taken the wrong road which proved fatal to so many poor fellows. The whole scene rushed back upon my memory as plainly as if it had happened only the week before, and many were the sorrowful reflections of that day. I stood upon the platform from that time on, now passing one place, then another, all perfectly familiar ground. It may be thought incredible but they were all fresh in my memory.

At Ogden, thirty-eight miles from Salt Lake City, we breakfasted and changed cars. The train stopping two hours gave me an opportunity to look around. Here was where we had met our first calamity, in the death by accident of a comrade. I wandered out to the place where we buried the poor boy. I did not go down to Salt Lake as I was so anxious to get home. I was now counting the hours. How strange it was that one can remain away for years, with thoughtlessness if not indifference, but when he finds himself on the road home the nearer he approaches it the less he can content himself from hour to hour and from moment to moment. It was so with me.

I spent nearly all the time on the platform for now we were traveling over the same part of the country I had passed over on my journey out. I left San Francisco at five o'clock p.m. and arrived in Cleveland the following Tuesday morning, having accomplished the journey in less than five days. Thirty-four years before, when I crossed it, it took over three months to accomplish only about one-half the distance—that is west of the Missouri River—the first trip being accomplished under indescribable hardships, privations and sufferings and death to many, and the last attended by ease, comfort, luxuries, palace cars and Pullman sleepers.

Upon arriving at San Francisco I sent a dispatch to Cleveland without signature, dated at the Palace Hotel, merely saying that C. D. Ferguson had arrived by the *Zealandria*. I sent another from Chicago saying I would be in Cleveland that night. This was all the notice my friends had of my coming; however as short as it was I was met at the depot. Thus having left Cleveland on the second of September 1849, I had returned to the place whence I started on the seventeenth of July 1883. I had left an impetuous, inconsiderate, beardless boy of seventeen years and returned a gray-bearded and bald-headed man of fifty to find that my father and mother had long since passed over to the other shore whence no traveler returns; that two brothers and four sisters had joined them; that of a once large family of children only three brothers and a sister remained.

I STOPPED in Cleveland but a few days and then hastened to Farmington, the old home town of my boyhood, and was happily surprised in finding quite a number of early friends. Here lived my great, good friend of California and Australia companionship, a faithful friend under all circumstances and in all places whose name has become familiar to the reader of these pages, S. H. Loveland. My brother drove me over to call on him. I discovered him in the field a little distance from his house. I told my brother to remain in the carriage until I ascertained if Sherb would know me.

He was at work about a hundred yards from where I got over the fence into the field. As I advanced he watched me until I had approached to within about thirty yards when he dropped his pitchfork and exclaimed, "I'll go to grass if that isn't Charlie Ferguson!" After our first mutual greetings I asked him how he knew me. He said it was from my movement and the way I jumped off the fence. He had said to himself if I was living he would swear it was I. All had supposed me dead for the last twenty years.

Then I went to see my old friend and playmate, M. W. Griffith whom we had left in San Francisco when we embarked on the *Don Juan*. I cannot express on paper the great and exciting interest and pleasure in these meetings of old companions. I can however safely say that our joys were mutual, and it would be hard to tell whose spirits rose to the higher pitch.

I remained in Farmington some three weeks visiting among old acquaintances, especially such as remained of the old people who had been neighbors and acquaintances of my father and mother. It seemed a pleasure to those good old people—and surely it was gratifying to me—to them that the boy had not forgotten them; to me that they remembered the boy. One dear old lady who used to be a great friend of my mother sent for me. I went and conversed with her for a pretty good length of time. As I left I had to go some 300 yards to where I hitched my horse. Just as I was getting into the buggy a little boy came running down to me and said, "If you please, Grandma would like to speak to you." So I went back to the old lady. She wanted to know if I ever smoked. I told her I did. She said she forgot to inquire. "Now," said she, "I want you to fill your pipe and sit down in front of me and have one good old smoke for your mother." Poor dear old friend of my mother! She sat and smoked, talked and laughed and cried, nearly at the same time, and when I finally bade her goodbye she said it was the happiest afternoon she had spent in years.

I now turn back to Illinois. Some of my youthful companions had grown to manhood during my absence and had moved west. They, knowing I had returned, invited me to visit them at Joliet and Gardner. While there I learned that John See was still alive and living not far from Samonauk. I took the train one day and went to see poor old John. I got a livery to take me across to the town where he lives, the name of which I have forgotten. It was upon a Sunday. I had no difficulty in finding his place in the little village. Upon a porch in front of a little cottage sat a feeble, gray-headed old man and an old lady, his wife. I approached in a familiar way and said, "Good day, John—good day, Mrs. See." They shook hands with me as freely as if I had been one of their nearest neighbors.

John looked at me some time with his sharp, black eyes and at last said, "I think you have the advantage of me; I can't call you to mind."

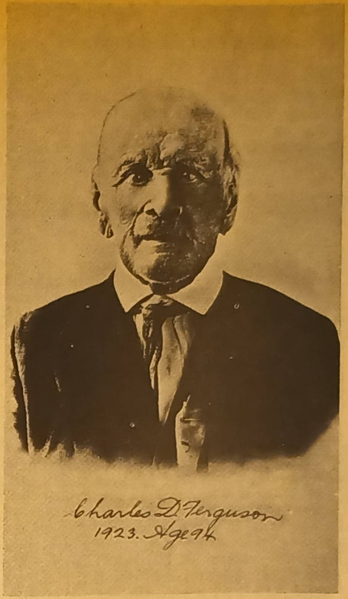
"What!" said I, "have you forgotten your old friends? You ought not to have forgotten me, John, I crossed the Plains with you."

"Oh no," said he, "you are mistaken about that; they are all dead that crossed the Plains with me."

"No, John, they are not all dead; you are mistaken."

"Oh no, I am not."

I asked what had become of Martin Costler.



"Oh, Martin came back poor a few years ago and went to Indiana and died there and that leaves me the only one left."

"I think you are mistaken, John," said I, "there is one other. Where is Charlie Ferguson?"

"He went from California to Australia and died there. Many times I have talked with the doctor (my brother) about that boy. I used to tell the doctor that although Charlie was only a boy of seventeen, he was like a man of twenty-seven."

"John, you are mistaken. Charlie is not dead; I am Charlie." It took a long time to convince him that he was not really dreaming.

At last when he got his mind to bear upon the matter, he laughed and then cried and finally sent the old lady to call in the neighbors and tell them that the boy who crossed the Plains with him was not dead but was there—come to see him once more. The poor old man was seventy-two years old, had had a stroke of paralysis and could only totter around upon a staff. I don't think I ever saw a man more rejoiced. He got all his neighbors in and wanted me to relate all the particulars of our journey as he had forgotten some of them, he said. Pretty soon he gathered himself up and tottered into another room but presently appeared bringing an old gun.

"Charlie," he said, "I want you to tell the people how far you killed a buffalo with that gun."

"I don't know, John," said I, "it was a long shot. It must have been 300 yards."

"Three hundred yards be dammed!" said John, "it was half a mile if it was an inch." The poor old man was evidently displeased and he toddled back with his old gun. I afterwards learned that he had told the story of my killing the buffalo with that gun half a mile off and none of his neighbors dared dispute it as they would incur his displeasure by so doing and he had told the story so often that he sincerely believed it. If anyone ventured to say half a mile was a pretty long shot, he not only made John his enemy but became obliged to listen to my pedigree and the pedigree of the gun and he would make assurance doubly sure by his old stereotyped expression—"Although he was only a boy of seventeen he was a man of twenty-seven."

I was urged to remain with John and did so for two days. As I was about to depart I noticed he was rather uneasy and when I came to bid him goodbye he said he was going with me for a short distance. I helped him into the buggy and he rode just outside the town and then asked me to stop; said he could not walk back a greater distance but he must come out thus far to bid me goodbye, he could not do it before all those people. Poor old man! He wept like a child. Four years have since elapsed and I do not know if he has survived until now.

I WENT TO SEE my sister-in-law, the doctor's wife. She was in Chicago. She did not recognize me. I gave her every chance to do so; I asked her if she remembered kissing a boy a long time ago and begging him not to go to California but to go home to his mother. Her sister was with her at this time.

She sprung up and said, "I do Charlie, and I will kiss you now."

I went to my oldest brother's in Wisconsin. His wife, who was at that moment alone, did not know me. I told her my name but she kept on sweeping. I began to think I was getting a rather cool reception when by some remark I saw that she did not know me. It was afterwards disclosed that some years before there was a man bearing my name who had stolen a horse in that neighborhood and fled the country. She had supposed me so long dead that when I told her my name she thought I must be the horse thief and that accounted for my cool reception.

And now with few exceptions of near kindred and rare exceptions of early acquaintances, I find myself substantially alone in my native country. I know certainly of but two now living who crossed the Plains with me away back in '49. Those who delved with me in the mines of California have probably all or nearly all laid aside the pick and pan of mortal life. In early times in the Sierra Nevada Mountains it used to be said of a dead miner that he had gone "Over the Range."

After visiting with all my friends and acquaintances I found the habits and customs of the Eastern people so different from those I had been in the habit of associating with for the past thirty-four years that I really began to be homesick to return to my old associates in Australia. Against the wishes of my brothers and sisters I made up my mind to return. I left for Chicago to visit my sister-in-law (the doctor's wife). She vainly tried to get me to change my mind but she was not successful in doing so. As a last request however she asked me to stop off in Nebraska and visit with her son who was not yet born when I left my old home in '49. I left Chicago on my way west and when I reached Ogalalla, Nebraska I stopped off as requested to visit with her son for a few days.

Two days before the time I had fixed to leave for San Francisco, a telegram arrived notifying my nephew of the sudden death of his brother in the East. It was difficult for him to get away without someone to look out for his business so I proposed to him that I would stay and look after things for a month or until his return. His business put me in closer connection with the people and I soon found myself more at home, as these rough western Nebraskans were more like the big kindhearted men I had been in the habit of associating with for the past thirty-four years. By the time my nephew returned I was as full of business as a Philadelphia office clerk. I soon saw an opening in a good express business and bought it out, running the same for about six months and then selling out at a good profit. Just at this time the first crop of grain was being threshed but there were no buyers or no place to store the grain so I built a storage warehouse 50 x 100 feet and bought up the farmers' grain, paying fifty cents per bushel for wheat, thirty cents for rye, twenty-five cents for barley and oats and fifteen cents for corn on the cob. At this time I did not think that there was more than 3,000 bushels of wheat nor more than 5,000 bushels of oats in the country. I was buying it to sell for seed for the next year as the country was settling up fast and newcomers arriving every day. After purchasing over 8,000 bushels of wheat and over 12,000 bushels of oats besides as much barley and considerable rye and corn I found I did not have any more room to store it and tried to get the Southern Pacific Railroad to furnish me more storage. But they would not grant it and I was left in the lurch. The oats, barley and corn I had on hand I could sell for feed but the wheat I did not know what to do with and had to stop purchasing.

The farmers still had more than 3,000 bushels on hand and declared they would plant no more next season. This set me to thinking and after going to bed one night I made up my mind that the only way out was a flour mill. I got up out of bed, wrote a letter to a milling company in Columbus, Ohio and mailed it on a train at three o'clock in the morning stating that I could pay half cash on delivery of the milling apparatus. In less than a week the company had a man at Ogalalla to look over the situation. He remained four days; I showed him over the country and its possibilities and when he left I was already at work with my team excavating for a 100-barrel flour mill.

I at once inserted an advertisement in the local paper stating I would buy all the wheat the farmers still had on hand just as soon as I could make room for it. This instilled a new spirit into the farmers and soon I was selling seed wheat for the next season as fast as I could deliver it at seventy-five cents a bushel, making myself a good profit.

IN ABOUT four months from the day I started excavating I had the mill running full blast. I liked the people and their ways but the confounded blizzards nearly doubled me up after living so long in a tropical climate. I soon had a chance to sell out at a profit of $4,000 and did so, going back to Ohio. I had no one to look after, had enough money to keep me during my declining years, so concluded I would take things easy and for one whole year I tried to fulfill this plan but never did I spend a more miserable and discontented twelve months. I wandered over the country from one place to another, always discontented. The last six months I took time out to write my book, *A Third of a Century in the Gold Fields*. I had it published in 1888 and sold out three editions, 10,000 copies, at $5.00 each. I then made up my mind to return to Australia.

Before leaving, however, I concluded to go back and visit my oldest brother in Wisconsin. While there he said to me, "Why do you go back to Australia? You have enough money to keep you. Why not stop among your own people? Buy some timber here and hold it for the raise that is sure to come." I took his advice and bought up some thirteen quarter sections of hardwood timber and erected a saw mill on the land. I cut the trees into lumber and the tops into four-foot fire wood, making a good thing out of both. As soon as the land was cleared I sold it to grangers and bought more timberland.

I had always had a great love for horses and soon found myself possessed of more than fifty head of thoroughbred stock, two of them costing $2,000 each, also many first-class mares that cost from $200 to $500 each. Things went on prosperously until the crisis of 1893 struck the whole country and it found me with 7,500,000 feet of hardwood lumber on my hands as well as about $25,000 worth of thoroughbred stock, with no sale for either. Where formerly I had sold lumber to parties in twenty and thirty car lots I could hardly sell one. And you could hardly take a chance of delivery unless the man would discount his bill. I peddled horses and lumber for three years trying to get from under. Eventually I paid up every dollar of my indebtedness but at the end I found myself with less than $2,000 left out of an immense fortune.

I then made up my mind to try the diggings again and struck out for Montana where I stayed for two years. I got hold of what proved to be a good claim and went back east to finance it. A company was formed and through some juggling when it was incorporated in West Virginia, my name was left off the papers and I was finally swindled out of what proved to be one of the best claims in the state. I then drifted back to California, worse off than when I first started mining there over fifty-five years before as a beardless youth of seventeen.

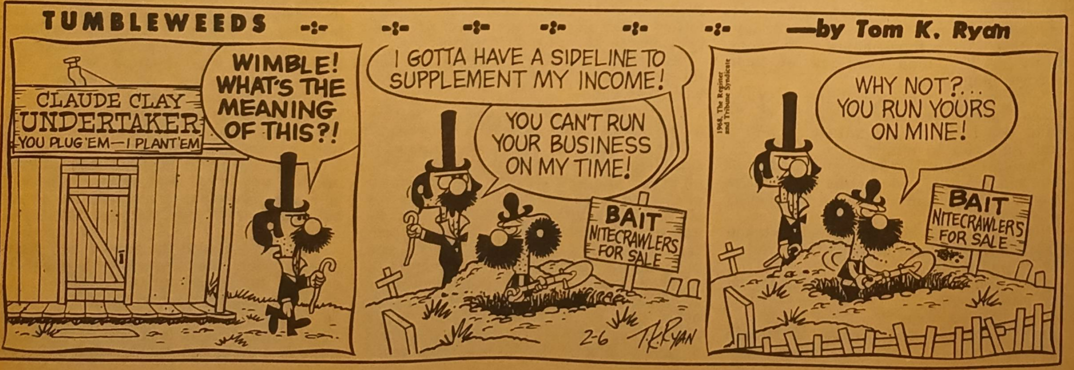
My first stop was at Nevada City, where I had spent over two years of my time in the early mining days of California and where I made and saved over $15,000 without ever striking it rich. I had made good wages, saved my money and never drank to any extent or gambled. Now I found that things were entirely different from the early days. It required capital to carry on mining and I was without it so I drifted to the scenes of my first mining in the state, on old Butte Creek, but found that things had changed there also.

Shortly after arriving at Chico I was taken down with malaria fever and was laid up in the Johnson House for over three months. When I was able to get out I struck a job on the Model dairy farm which I held steadily for over seven years. Then I was stricken with asthma and it has stuck with me ever since. I have spent hundreds of hard-earned dollars in an effort to find a place where I could get a good breath again but without results and I have always returned to dear old Chico as the best place in all my travels that I have found, and here I probably will spend the few remaining days that nature calls upon me to put in. Although I still retain all my mental faculties to their fullest extent, my physical strength is nearly exhausted and I have been compelled to resort to . . . [republishing my memoirs] to secure funds enough to carry me through my last remaining days.

Hoping that the reader has been satisfactorily interested in the simple and true statements of facts which I have here recorded just as they occurred, I will close merely by saying that my own experiences are but those of thousands of others who braved the dangers of crossing the Plains in the early days of '49 and '50.

Yours respectfully,
Charles D. Ferguson
Chico California, Sept. 1, 1923.

Note to readers who may have missed the first part of Charlie Ferguson's book: Copies of the Summer 1969 Old West are available at 50c each. Order from Western Publications, Inc., P. O. Box 3668, Austin, Texas 78704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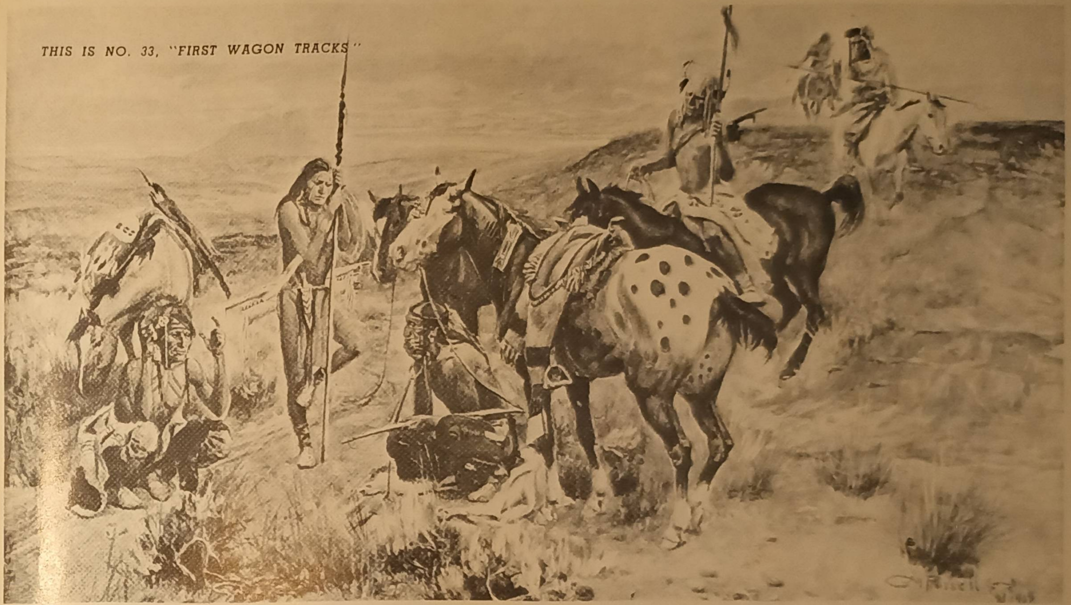
THIS IS NO. 33, "FIRST WAGON TRACKS"

CHOOSE FROM SELECTIONS BELOW. LIST NUMBERS ON A SHEET OF PAPER.

1—Ambushed, 10x14
2—A Tight Dally & Loose Latigo, 10x14
3—A Loose Cinch, 8½x11
4—A Wounded Grizzly, 10x13
5—Buffalo Hunt (spears), 8x11½
6—Boss of the Trail Herd, 9x12
7—Bronc to Breakfast, 8½x15
8—Blackfeet Burning Crow Buffalo Range, 9x12
9—Bucking Bronco, 9x12
10—Better Than Bacon, 9x12
11—On The Move, 10x14
12—Buffalo Hunt (Arrows), 8x12
13—On The Trail, 8x11
14—The Pony Raid, 16x11½
15—Close Quarters, 10x11
16—Capturing the Grizzly, 8½x15
17—Cinch Ring, 8½x15
18—Caught With The Goods, 10x14
19—Cowboy Life, 10x14
20—Call of The Law, 10x14
21—Carson's Men, 10x14
22—Return of the Warriors, 10x14
23—Piegan Indian, 10x14
24—Renegades Return, 11½x16
25—Chief Joseph, 8x11
26—Deadline of the Range, 10x14
27—Disputed Trail, 10x14
28—Dangerous Cripple, 10x14
29—Buffalo on the Move, 8x10½
30—Early American, 10x14
31—Elk in Lake McDonald, 9x12
32—First Furrow, 9x12
33—First Wagon Tracks, 8½x15
34—Finding The Trail, 10x14
35—Heads or Tails, 8½x15
36—Heading the Right Way, 10x14
37—In Without Knocking, 10x14
38—Women of the Plains, 7½x9½
39—Innocent Allies, 10x14
40—Indian Love Call, 10x14
41—Jerked Down, 8½x15
42—The Jerkline, 10x14
43—Loops & Swift Horses are Surer than Lead, 7½x11
44—Last of the Herd, 8½x15
45—Last Chance or Bust, 9x12
46—Mad Cow, 9x12
47—Meat's Not Meat Until it's in the Pan, 10x14
48—The Challenge, 8½x12
49—When Arrows Spell Death, 10x14
50—Old Fashioned Stage Coach, 8½x11
51—At The End of The ROPE, 9x12
52—Prospectors, 9x12
53—Planning the Attack, 10x14
54—Pipe of Peace, 14x7½
55—Price of His Rope, 10x14
56—Queen's War Hounds, 10x14
57—Rainy Morning in a Cow Camp, 9x12
58—Roping a Grizzly, 9x12
59—Red Man's Wireless, 14x7½
60—Roping a Wolf, 9x12
61—Smoking Them Out, 10½x11
62—Scattering the Riders, 9x12
63—Strenuous Life, 10x14
64—Sun Worshippers, 10x14
65—Serious Predicament, 8½x15
66—Single Handed, 10x14
67—Slick Ear, 10x14
68—Smoke of a 45, 9x12
69—Sage Brush Sport, 10x14
70—Signal Fire, 10x14
71—When Red Man Talks War, 10x14
72—In Enemy Country, 10x14
73—The Medicine Man, 10x14
74—Trails End, 10x14
75—The Holdup, 10x14
76—The Bolter, 10x14
77—The Attack, 10x14
78—The Drifter, 12x16
79—The Tenderfoot, 9x12
80—Two of a Kind Wins, 10x14
81—Last of 5,000, 8x10
82—When Tracks Spell Meat, 10x14
83—When the Nose of a Horse Beats the Eyes of Man, 10x14
84—When Ignorance is Bliss, 10x14
85—Wild Horse Hunters (cowboys), 10x14
86—Wild Horse Hunters (Indians), 9x13
87—Whose Meat?, 10x14
88—Wagon Boss, 10x14
89—When Mules Wore Diamonds, 10x14
90—A Crown Chief, 8x11
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